Twenty Six
CONCERTOS

Composed for
Four Violins, One Alto-VIOLA, a
Violoncello, and Ripieno-BASS.

Divided into
Four BOOKS in Score, for the use of

PERFORMERS,

On the
Harpsichord

BY

CHARLES AVISON.
Organist in Newcastle upon Tyne.

BOOK. I.

Newcastle.
Printed for the Author, and sold by J. Johnson, in Cheapside,
J. Walsh, Cathrine Street, London, and R. Bremner, in Edinburgh.
1758.

Chas. Avison

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Concertos complete the firſt of the four books which I purpoſe to publiſh in SCORE.

Perſons who are accuſtomed to peruſe muſic thus publiſhed, very ſenſibly experience the advantages it gives them in performing muſic in general. For being thus enabled to judge, at one view, of the laws and effects of harmony, thoſe various *Melodies*, *Accompanyments*, and *Meaſures*, which conſtitute the WHOLE OF A MUSICAL DESIGN, are immediately traced, and their beauties as well as defects, aſcertained with the greateſt preciſion. Hence, a complete and legible SCORE is the beſt plan for any muſical publication, not only as it renders the ſtudy of muſic more eaſy and entertaining, but alſo the performance of it more correct and judicious.

Another motive for publiſhing inſtrumental compoſitions in this manner, is, that rational taſte, which prevails at preſent amongſt lovers of muſic, for performances on the organ and harpſicord; theſe inſtruments being, of all others, the beſt adapted for the ſtudy and practice of muſic from the SCORE: For, notwithſtanding their reſpective powers are confined (a defect chiefly ariſing from the nature of the inſtruments themſelves) ſo that they allow the performer but little ſcope for expreſſion: nevertheleſs, by their extenſive compaſs, and range of all the ſcales, they contain all the harmonies that can well be employed in every ſpecies of good muſic; and, therefore, allow the performer every deſirable opportunity to diſplay thoſe talents which are ſuitable to them. For this reaſon, a ſkilful hand on the organ or harpſicord, may give a pleaſing idea of a general performance in concert, and repreſent a full band of muſicians, all animated with the ſame ſpirit to do juſtice to the compoſition. The chorus, more eſpecially, may be finely diſtinguiſhed by the ſwell-organ, or on thoſe harpſicords which expreſs the *Forte-piano*, which are now coming into uſe. But ſhould our attention, at times, be interrupted by too numerous an audience, or the piece be performed in a too large *orcheſtra*, we cannot hope to feel the more delicate powers of this finer inſtrument. After all, it may juſtly be queſtioned whether theſe, or any other effects in the compoſition, can be fully produced by any performance whatever, unleſs the eye, by ſome previous and intimate view of all the parts, aſſiſts the ear in comprehending the whole.

The invention of *Subjects*, or *Airs*, for muſic is the work of genius: The contrivances in *Modulation*, *Accompanyment*, and *Meaſure*, demand the application of art and the rules. Hence thoſe, who are not ſkilled in the rules, found their different opinions in this art on fancy alone. Some prefer a name, a ſtile, a national character, and judge as theſe give a ſanction: Others, are only ſtruck with the marvellous. A ſudden cromatic chord at once commands their attention, while the more natural melody is entirely loſt upon them. Some again, deſpiſe all modern muſic, and ſigh for the ancient lyre: Others expire at an opera, and are incapable of feeling any better ſtrain: So various are the judgments of ſuch perſons as are guided by fancy alone. But, if muſic be compoſed agreeably to principles founded in nature, and invariably the ſame in all ages and nations, the true judge of harmony always approves it, whatever name, ſtile, or national character it bears.

For this reaſon, the point I have chiefly had in view, is, to work up every principal movement according to ſome *Plan of Compoſition*, in order to produce an agreement of *Modulation*, *Accompanyment*, and *Meaſure*, or, what may rather be termed the UNITY OF THE MUSICAL PIECE. Alſo, to produce both *Variety* and *Order* in the *ſame* movement, I have frequently changed the ſubject, as in vocal muſic at the change of every ſentence, while the *Meaſure*, or ſtile of the *firſt* ſubject, is every where preſerved, to keep up a ſimilarity of air throughout the whole. I have alſo, for the ſame reaſon, contrived the *Accompanyments* to have as much air as poſſible; which ſometimes occaſions a paſſing diſcord in the part: nevertheleſs, theſe tranſitions have their proper effect, as they are quickly melted into the fundamental harmony which governs the modulation, which a good ear chiefly attends to, as the true teſt of muſic. I have not, however, attempted to ſtrike out uncommon melodies, or to purſue thoſe which are adopted,

in

in foreign modulations, that could not be ſupported by ſome natural *Counter-point*. And as it is ſafer to aim at pleaſing than ſurpriſing, eſpecially in the muſical art, I flatter myſelf I ſhall be in leſs hazard of diſappointing true lovers of harmony in their peruſal of theſe concertos.

The application of *Meaſure* in muſic principally regards the conſtruction and ranging of *Cadences*, which, like *Rhythm* or *Numbers* in poetry, and ſometimes like what is called a *Roundneſs of Phraſe* in proſe, ſerves to illuſtrate the different ſpecies of airs, as alſo to aſcertain their proper time of duration; for ſlow and ſolemn *Meaſures* ſhould never be too long, nor quick and lively ones too ſhort, elſe our attention will either be wearied, or ſuddenly diſappointed; the contraſting, therefore, theſe different *Meaſures* in the ſame concerto, and regarding more their *Modes* of *Time* than of *Tune*, never fails to give pleaſure to the ear by the variety which it produces.

It is certain that the changes in modulation do not affect us ſo inſtantly as when they are joined with a change of movements. But the force of theſe, in a great meaſure, depends on the diſcernment and ſkill of the performer. The muſical terms which denote the various degrees of quickneſs, &c are not ſufficient for the purpoſes intended, (nor perhaps is it a thing in the power of words to aſcertain) theſe being, in fact, no other than negative directions: And as the term *Adagio*, or *Andante*, can only imply not *Allegro*, or *Preſto*, and *vice verſa*; ſo the true medium, proper to the time of each movement, can only be found by a mature examination of the whole. If then the perfection of muſic be at all worthy our care, this leading art in the performance muſt needs be conſidered as the ſureſt guide to every beauty in the compoſition.

When we conſider the utility of full-muſic for inſtruments, both in publick and private concerts, and the eſſential variety which it gives to thoſe elegant entertainments; it is ſomewhat to be regretted that ſo few compoſers have employed their talents in this extenſive branch of the art. For among the numerous collections of muſic which are every year publiſhed, both in Holland and France, as well as in Britain, it is certain we yet have no great choice of pieces that are really excellent for the ſervice of concerts.

The concertos of *Cerelli* and *Geminiani*, and the beſt overtures and concertos of *Handel*, *Martini*, &c. have hitherto been the ſupport of our muſical entertainments: But I have ſome reaſon to hope that the concertos from *Scarlatti's Leſſons*, when once they have got acceſs to the public ear, will be a durable addition to this uſeful claſs of muſic. As to my own concertos, they would not have increaſed the number, had not the favourable reception of my firſt eſſay induced me to hazard a ſecond. The ſucceſs this alſo met with, was too powerful a motive with me, not to purſue an employment, in itſelf always engaging. Theſe conſiderations therefore induced me to add thoſe concertos alſo to the collection.

Newcastle, 1758.

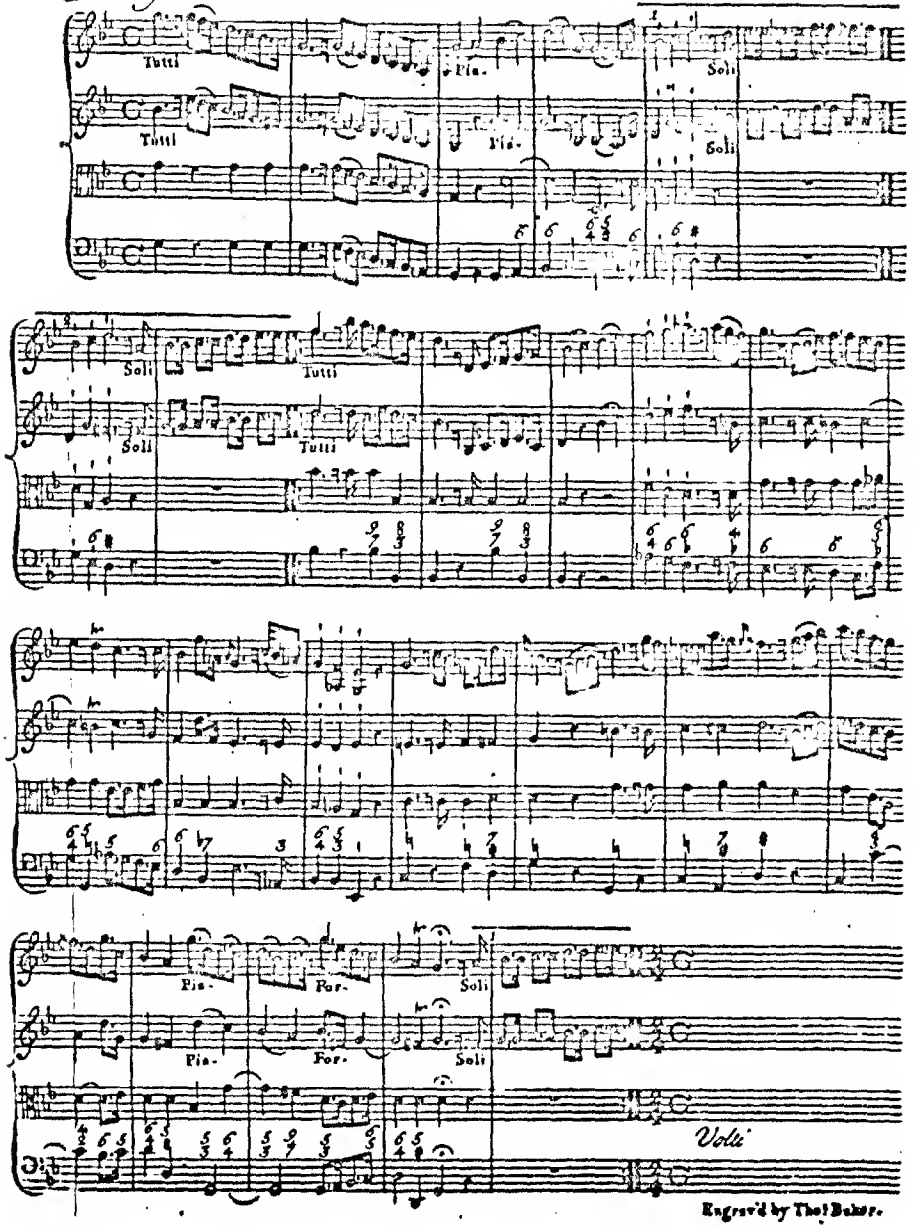
P. S. As the *Score* of this work includes the four principal parts only, the pages in view, in general, exhibit the deſign of every whole movement, and therefore may be readily performed upon all the beſt inſtruments in uſe, as well as the harpſicord.

The remaining works will be publiſhed by one book at a time, and with all convenient ſpeed, till the whole is completed.

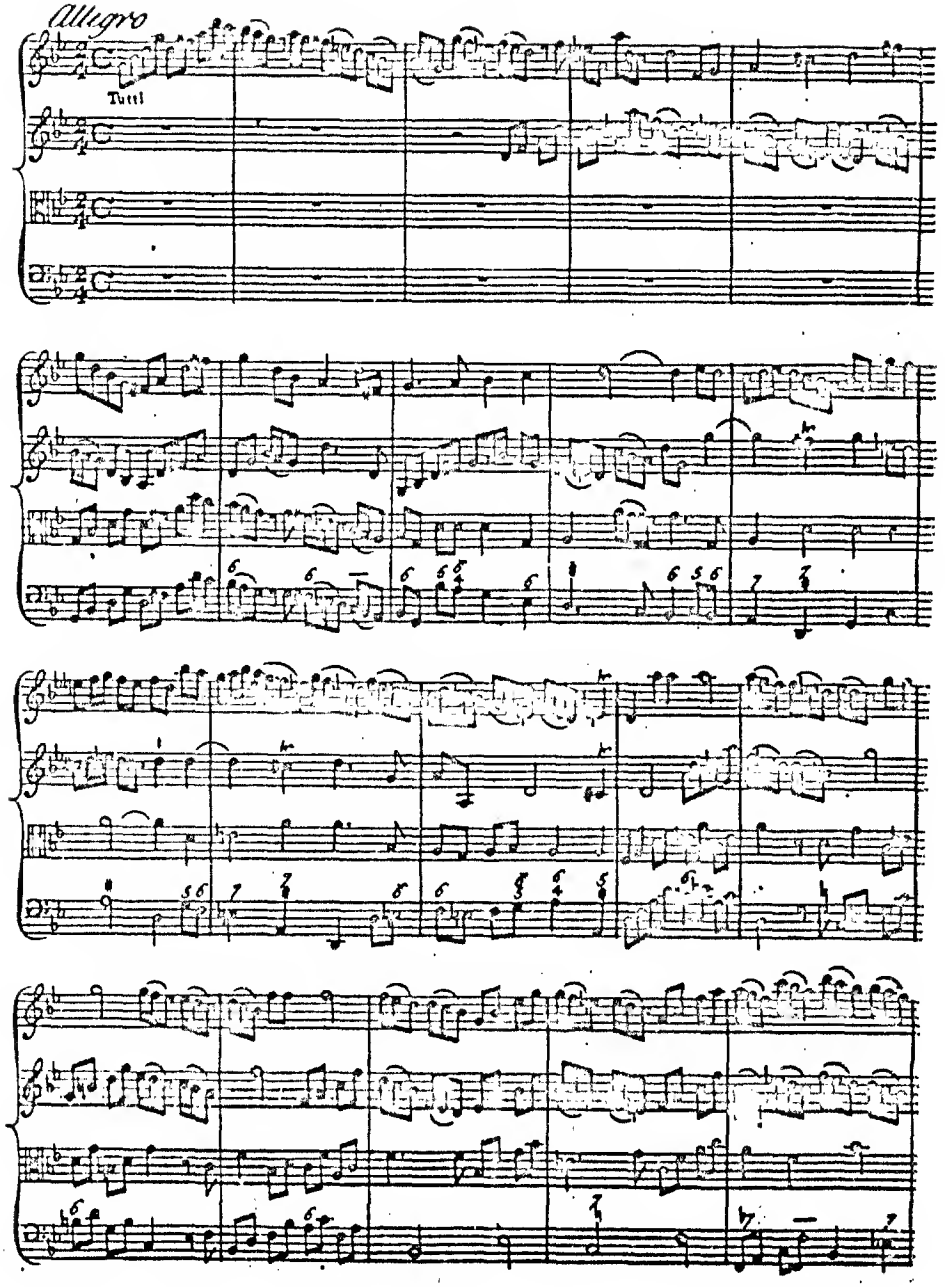
The Subſcription (half a guinea for the firſt three, and fifteen ſhillings for the laſt) to be paid as the books are delivered; and the ſubſcribers names to be printed with the laſt work.

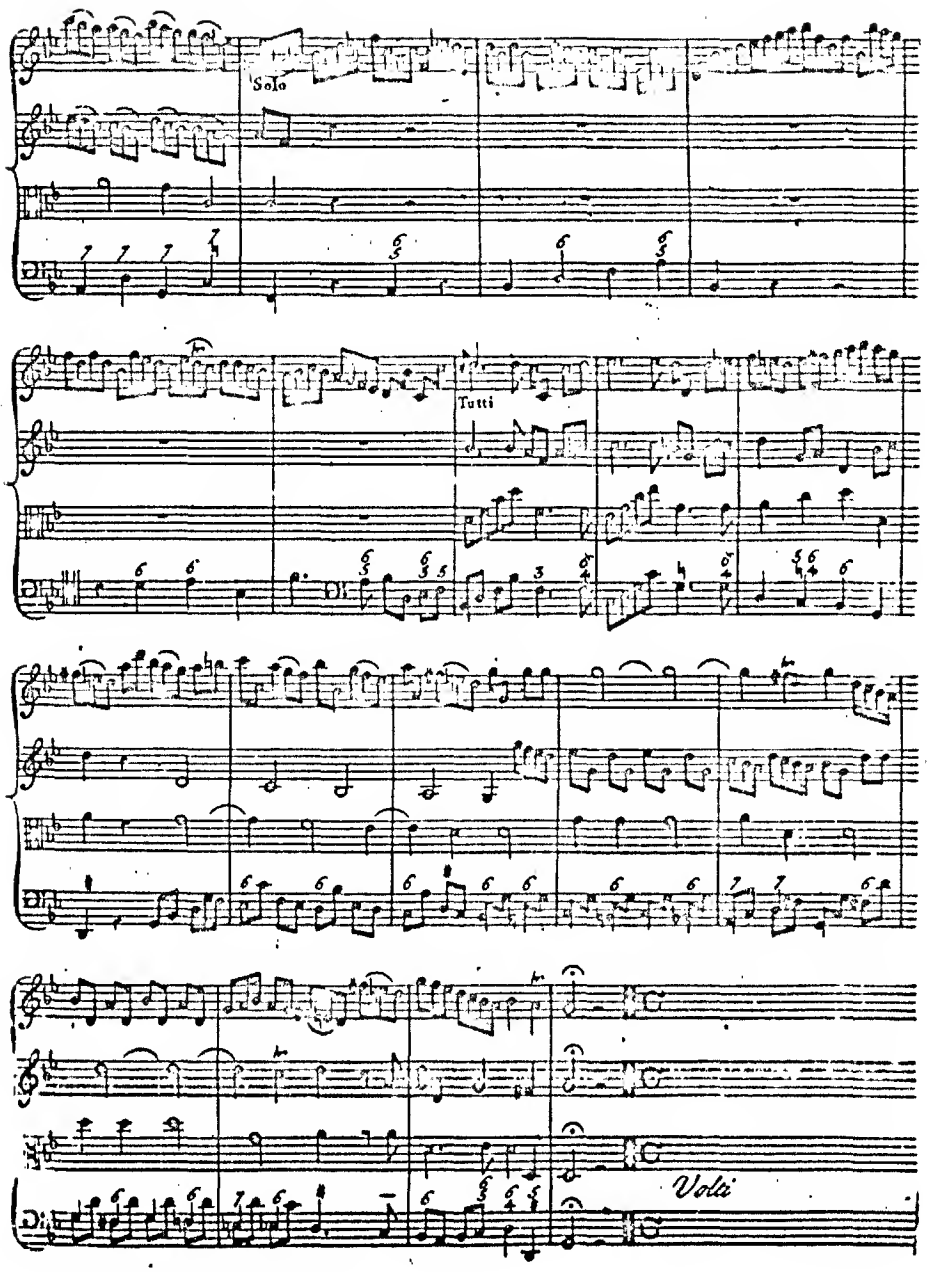
Subscriptions will be taken in by Mr Johnſon in Cheapſide. Mr Walſh in Catherine-ſtreet, London; Mr Brymner in Edinburgh; and by the Author in Newcaſtle.

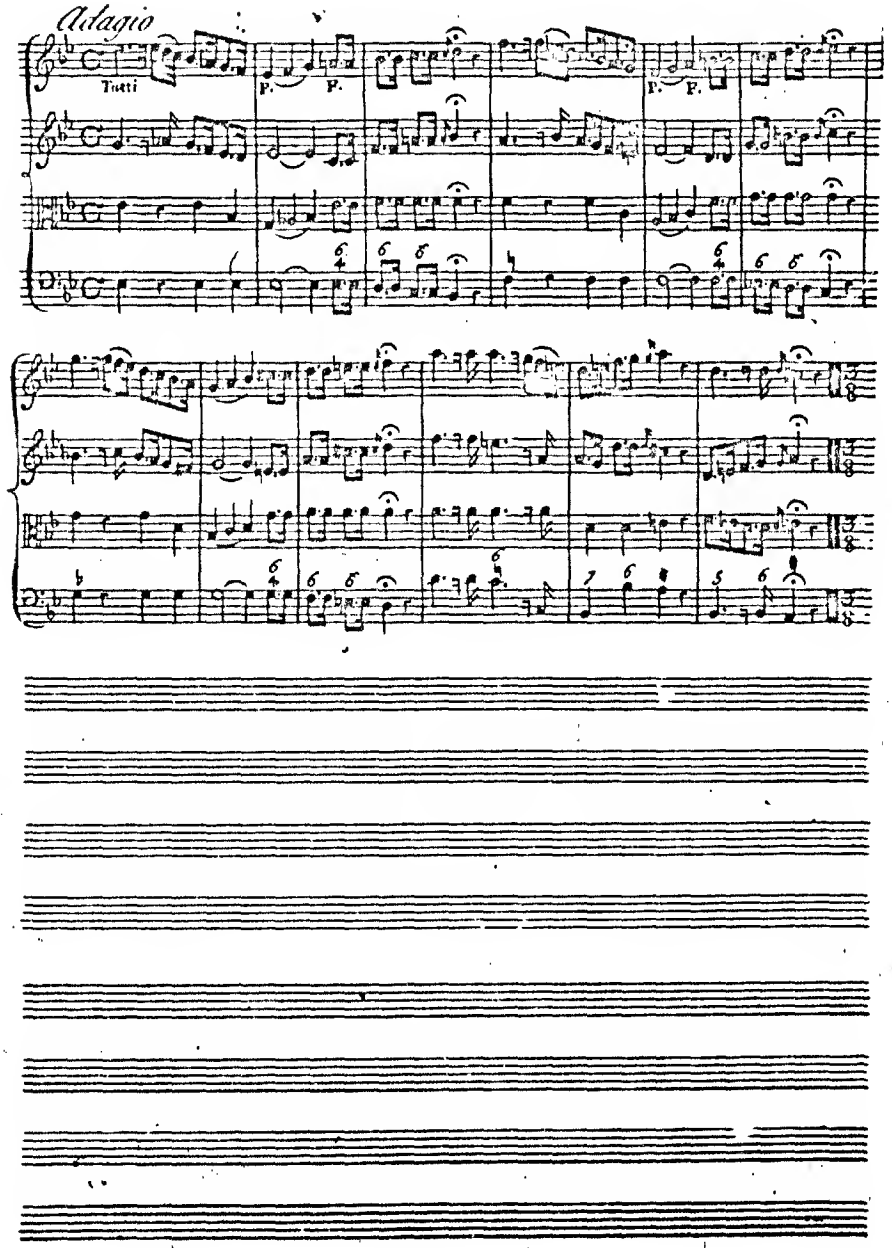
Adagio CONCERTO I

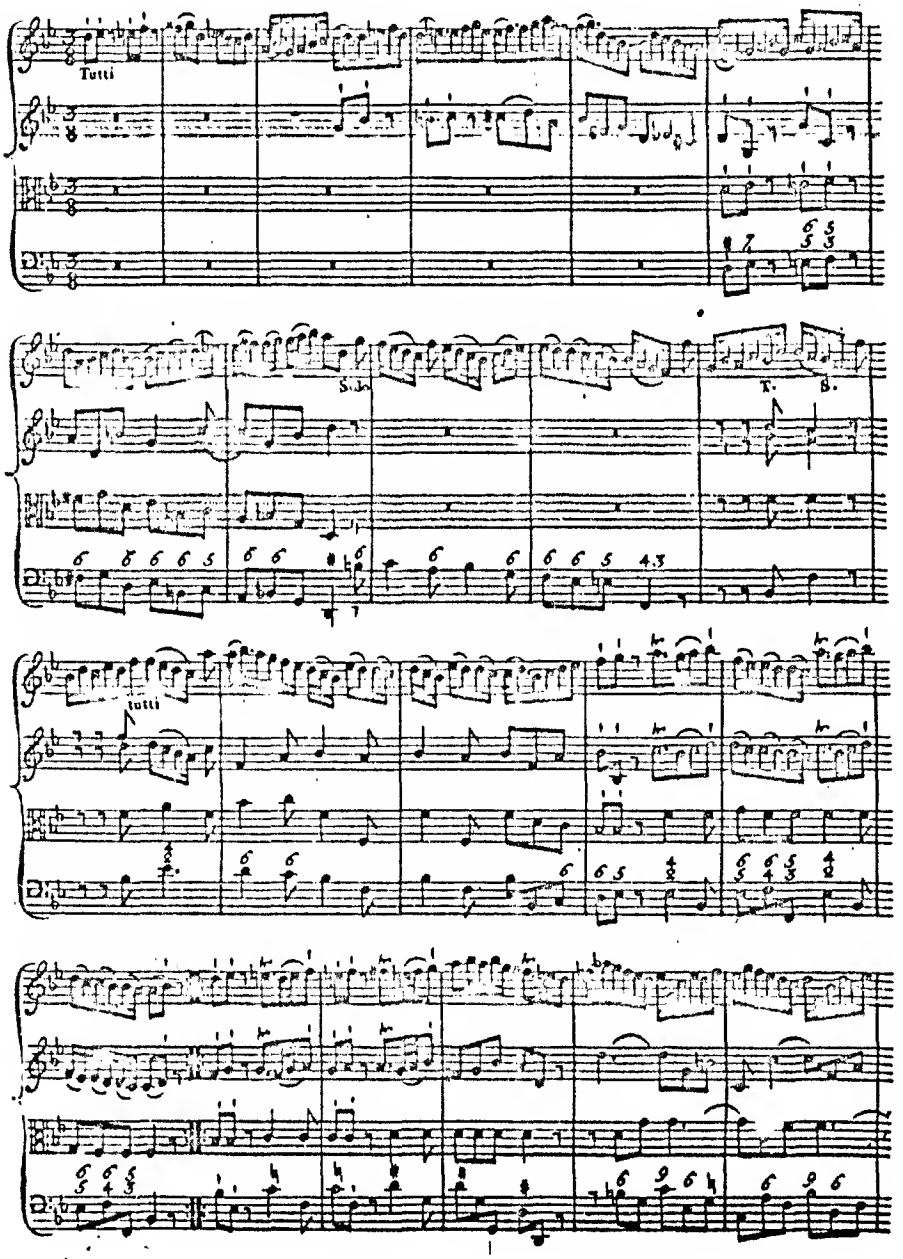


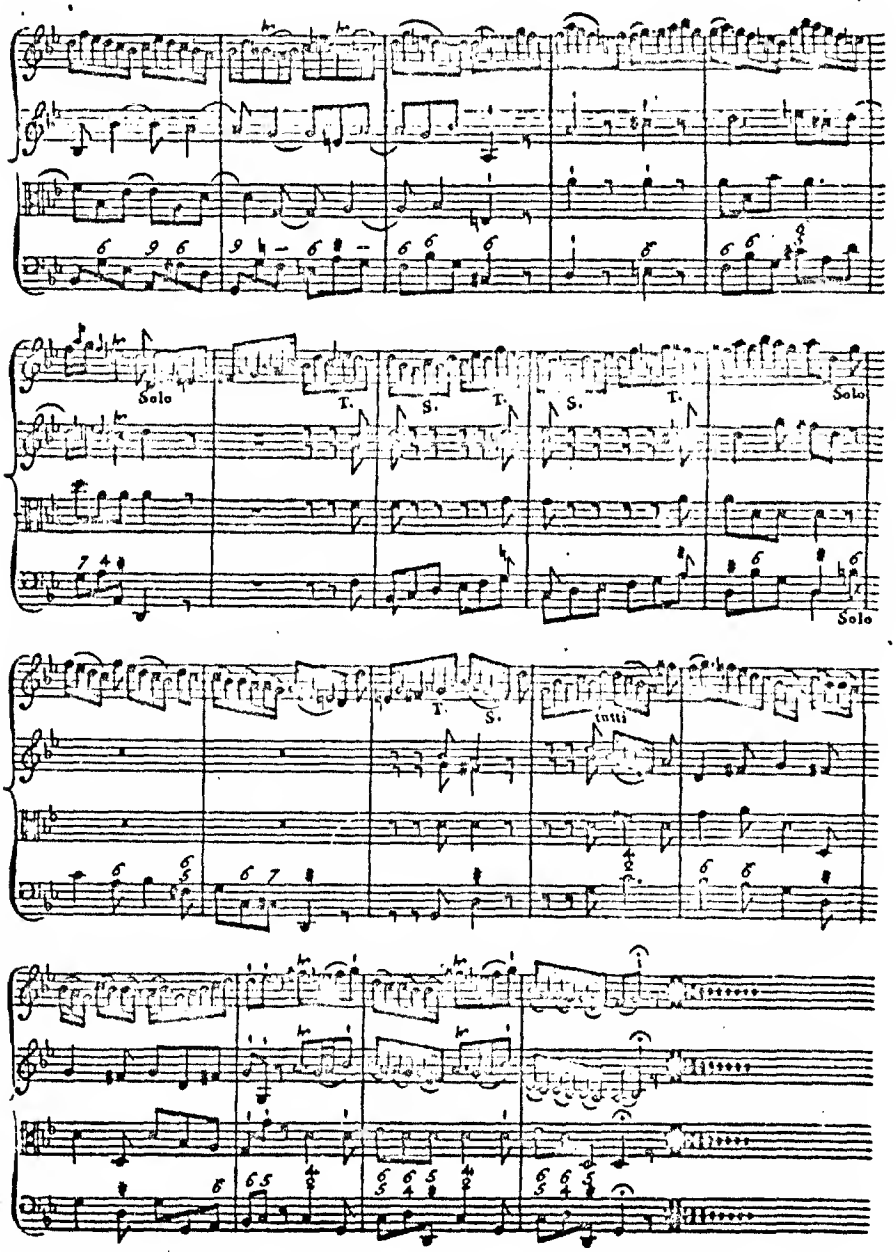
Engrav'd by Tho! Baker.


Allegro
Tutti


Solo
Tutti
Volti

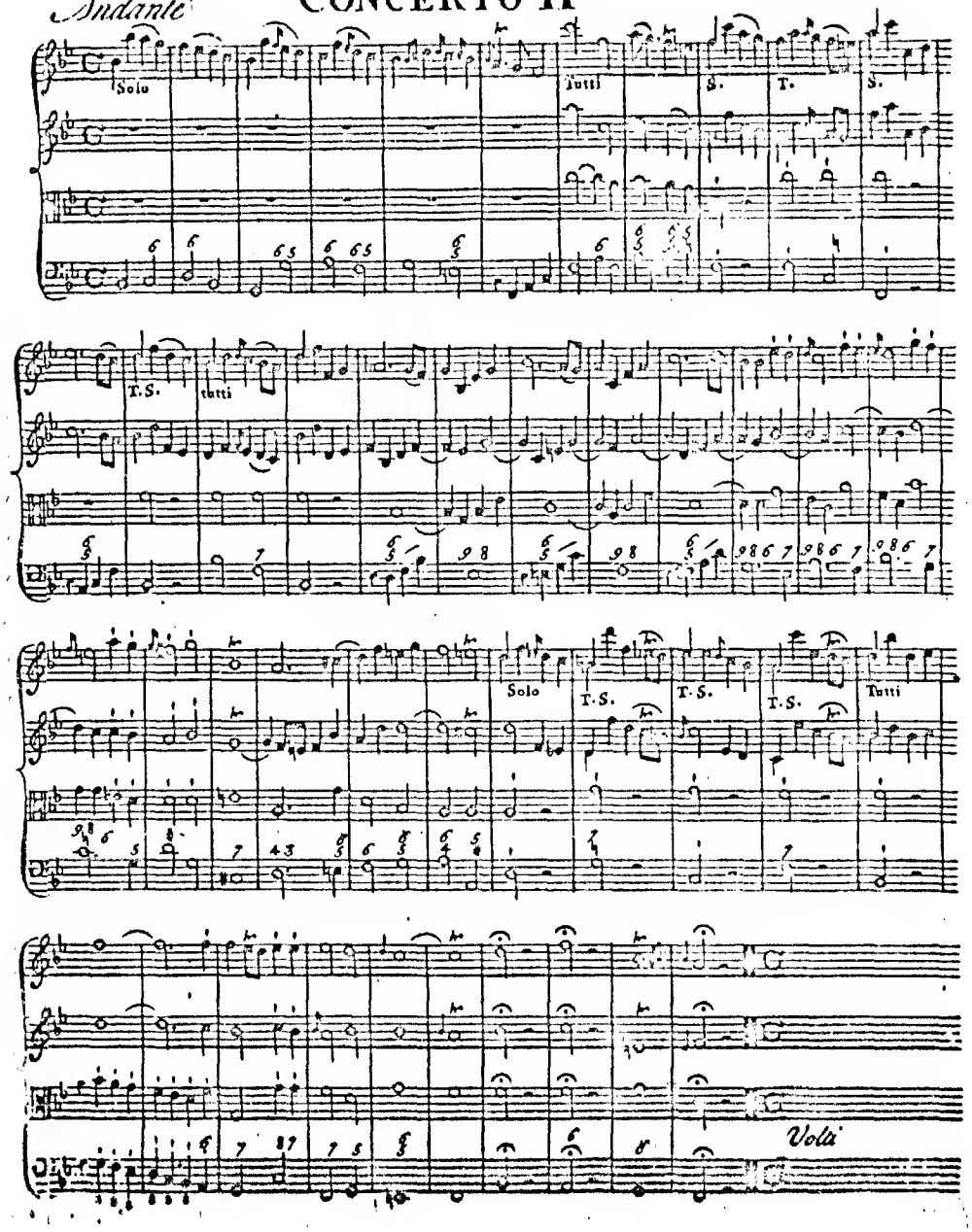

Adagio
Tutti
F.
F.
F.
F.

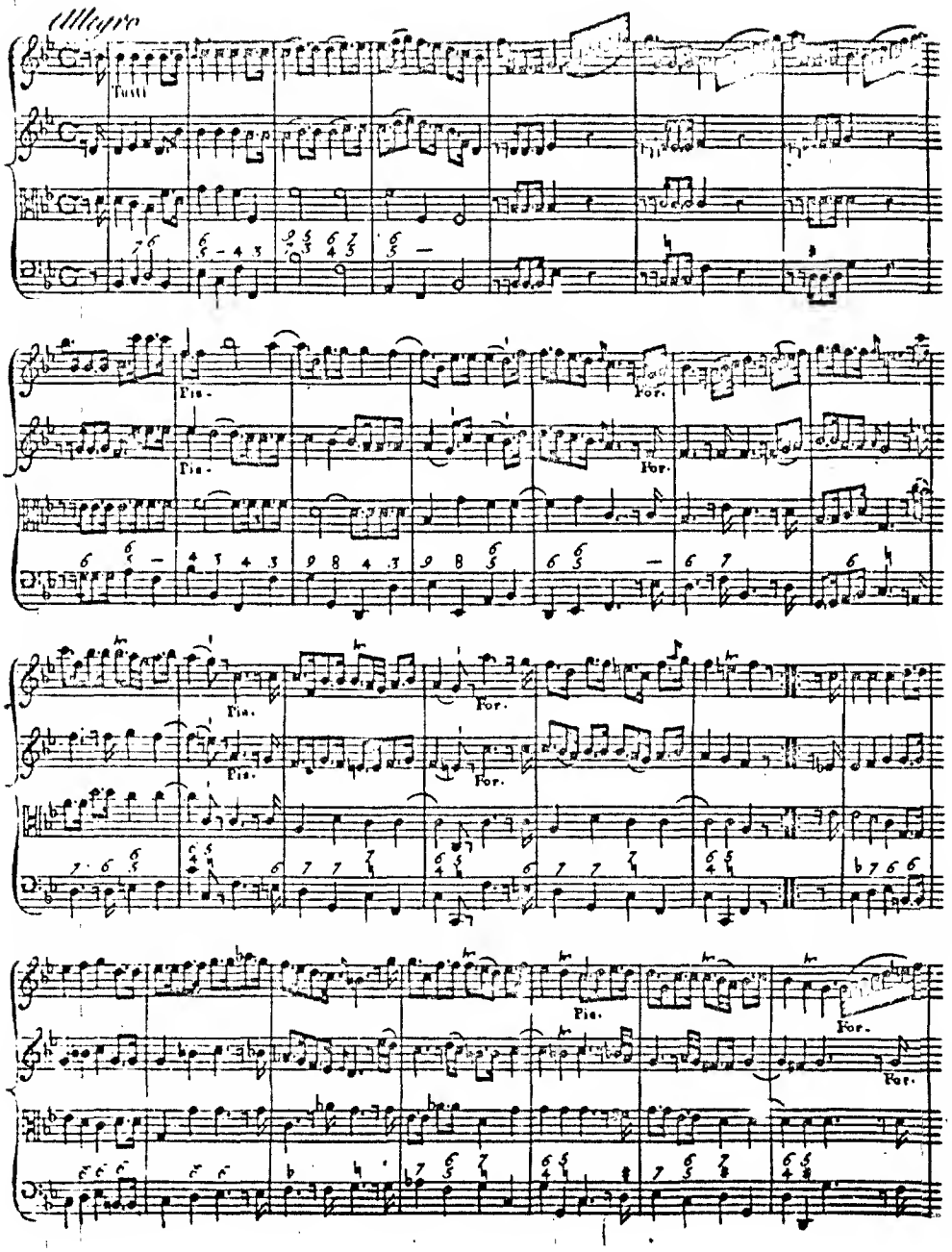

Tutti
S.
T.
B.
tutti

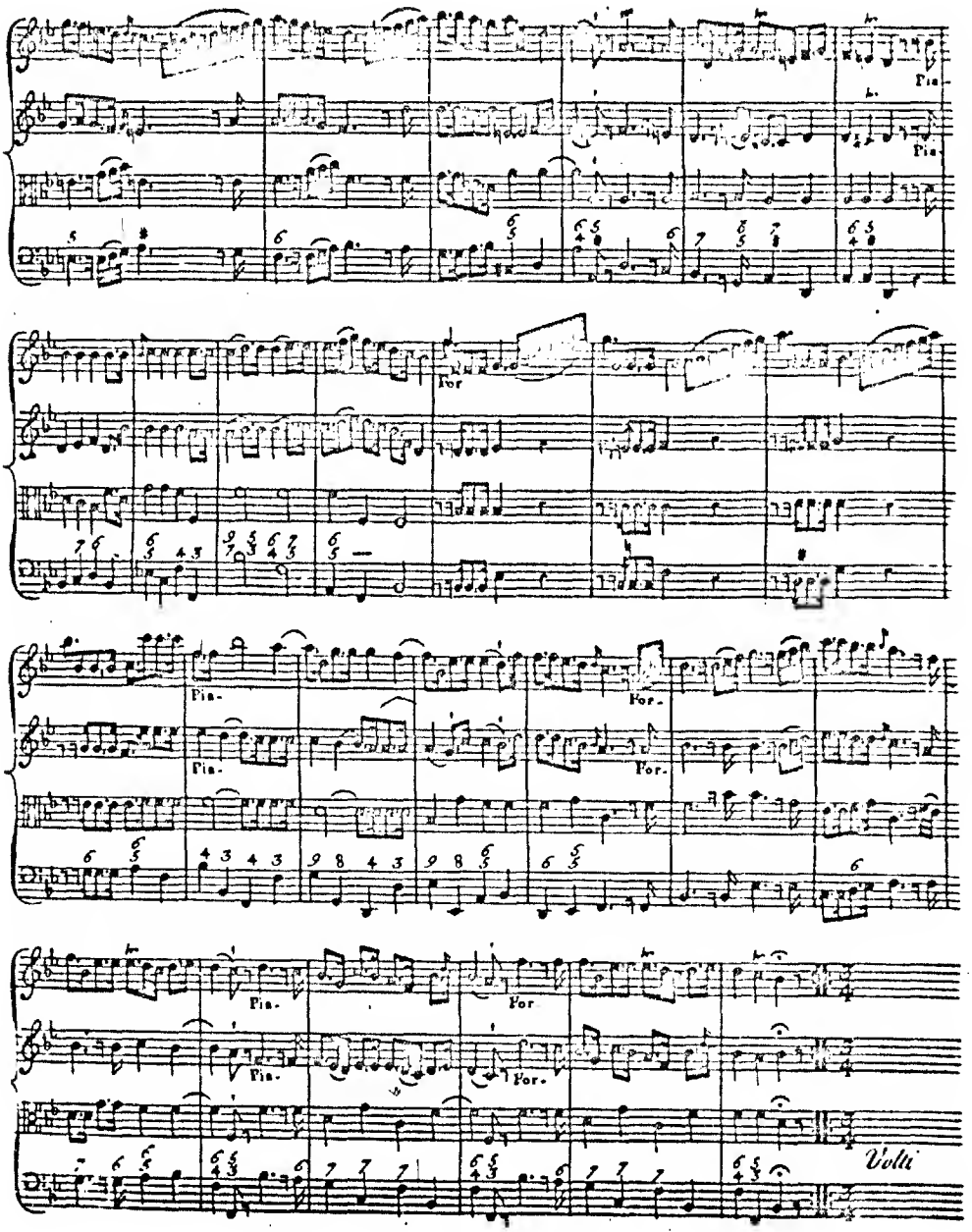

Solo
T.
S.
T.
S.
T.
Solo
Solo
T.
S.
tutti

CONCERTO II

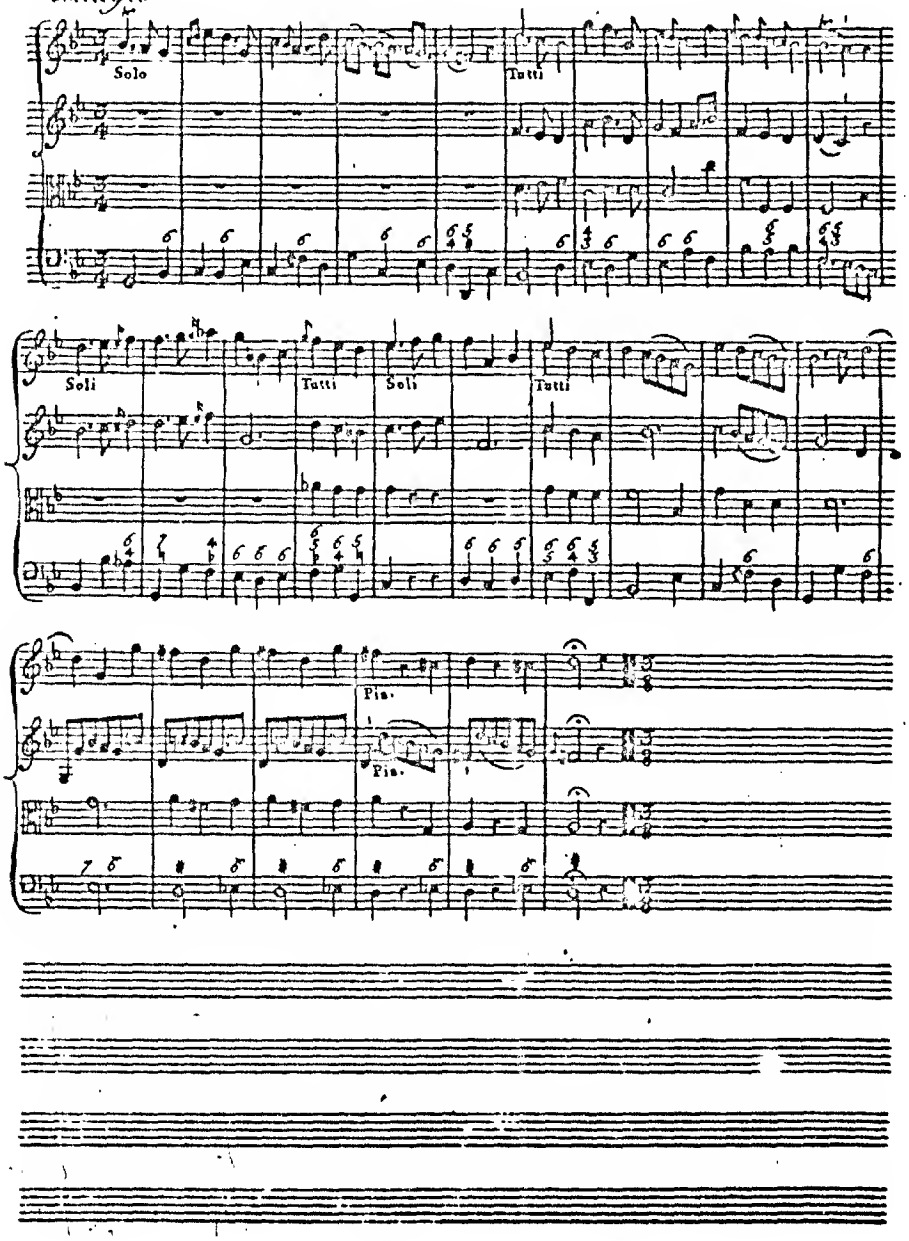
Andante

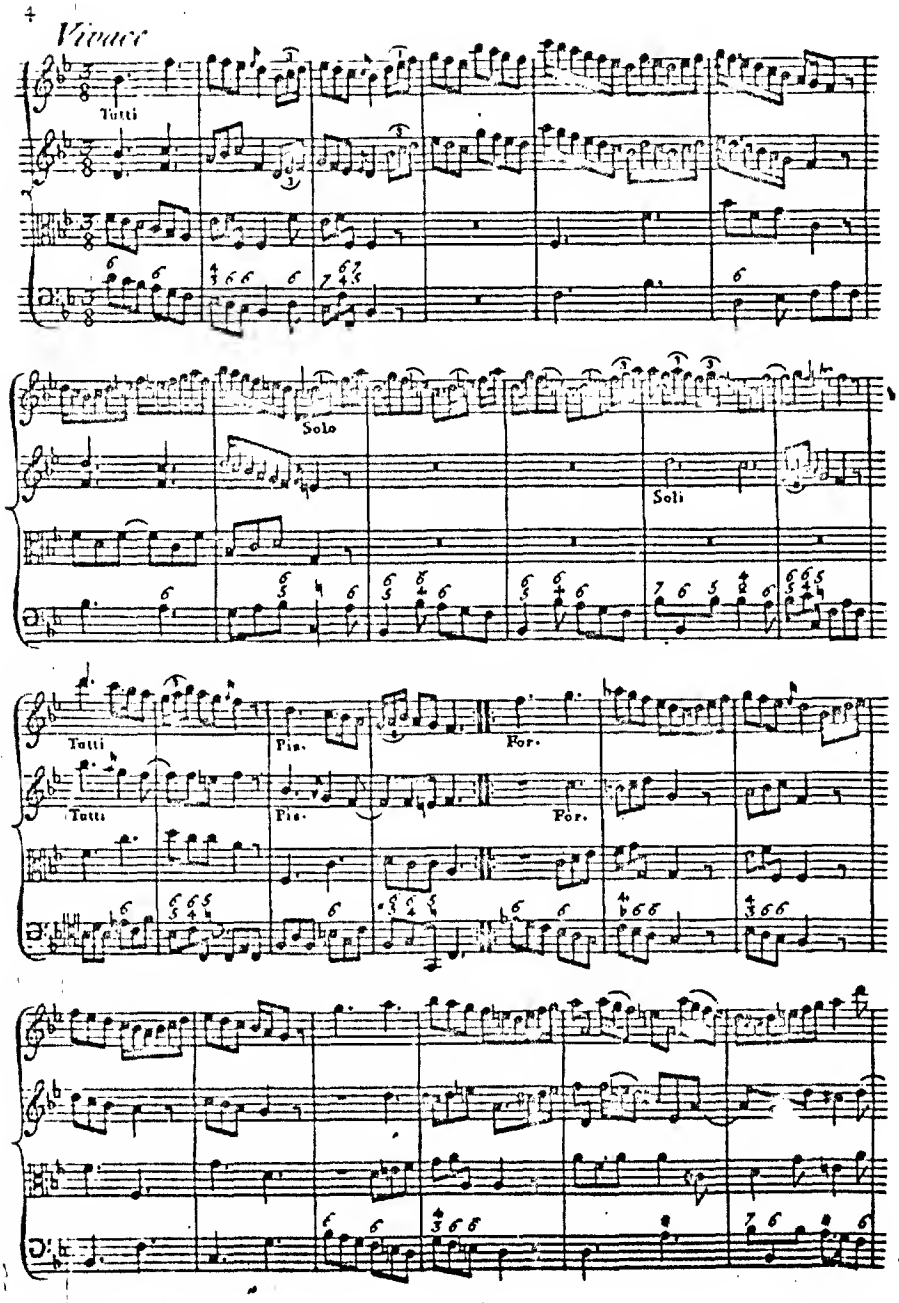


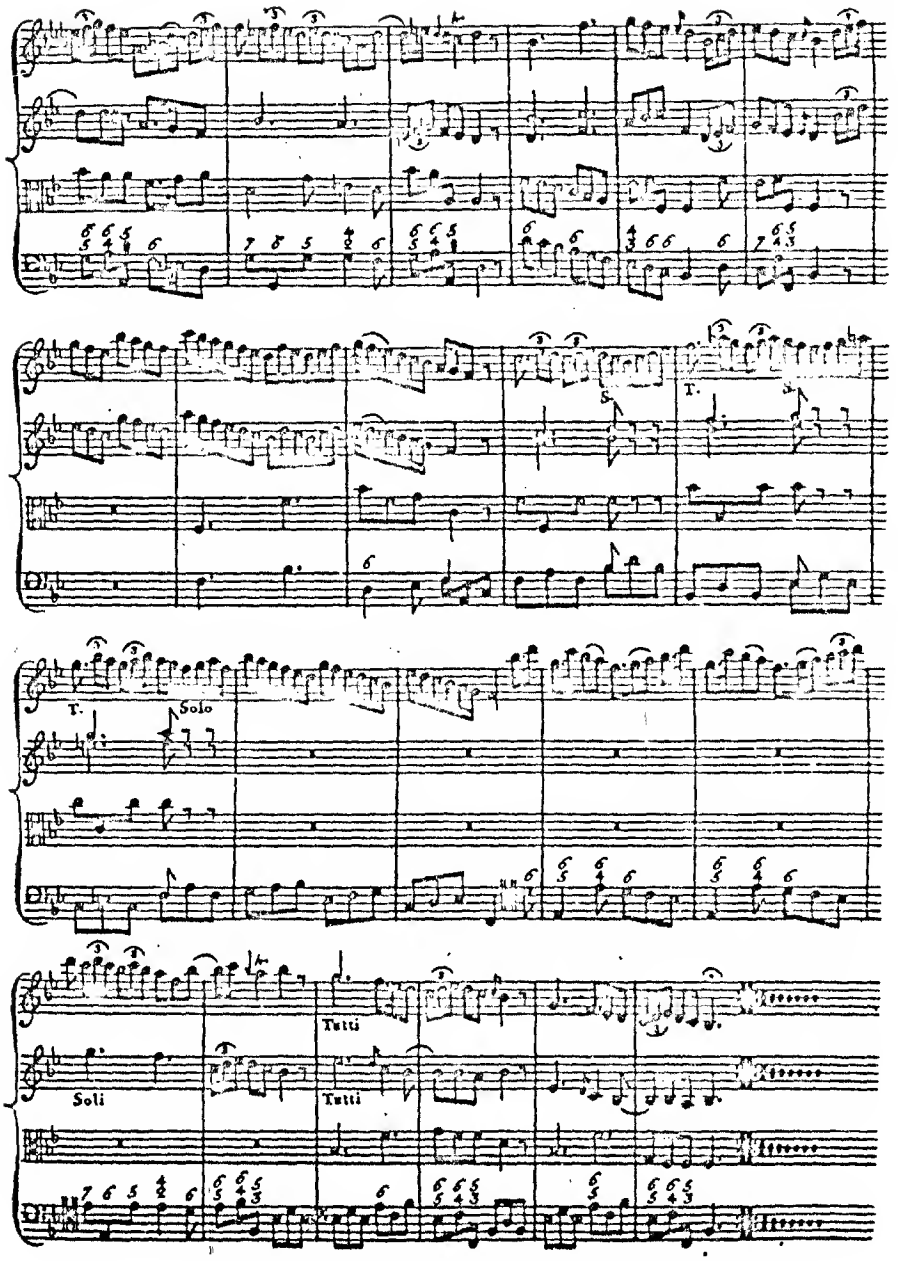

Allegro
Tutti
Fia.
For.


Pia.
Pia.
For
Pia.
Pia.
For.
For.
Pia.
Pia.
For
For.
Volti

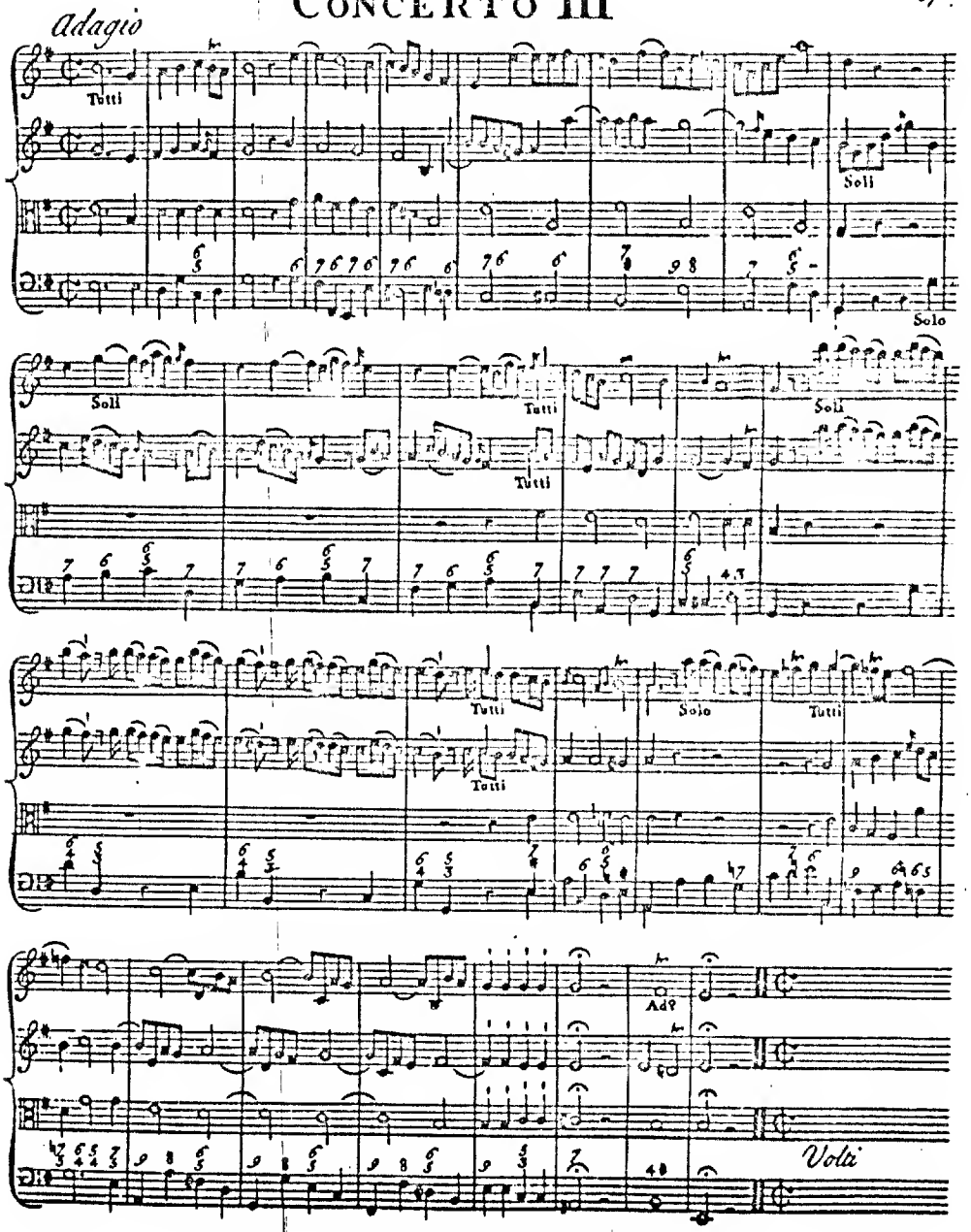
Adagio

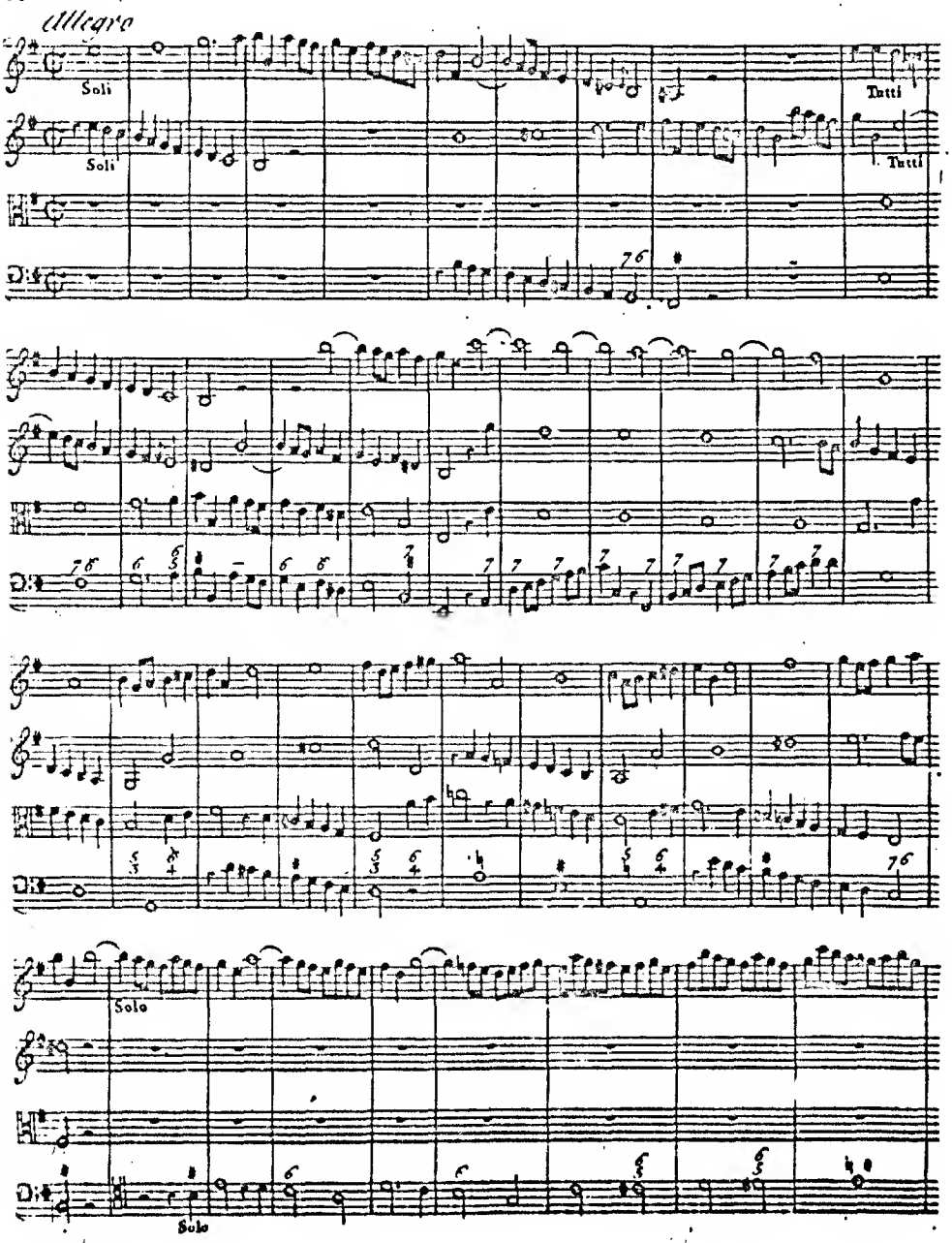


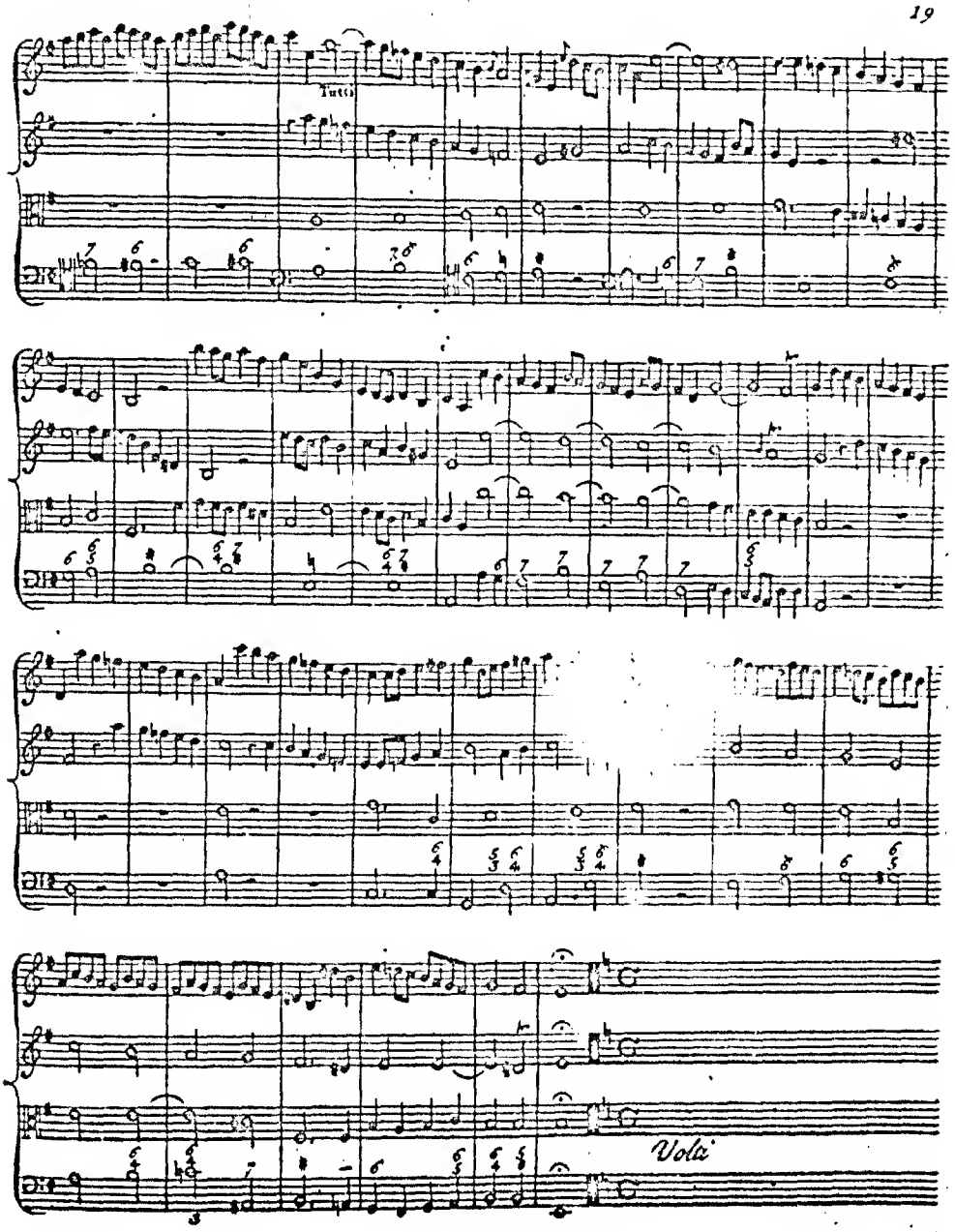

Vivace
Tutti
Solo
Soli
Tutti
Fia.
For.
Tutti
Fia.
For.

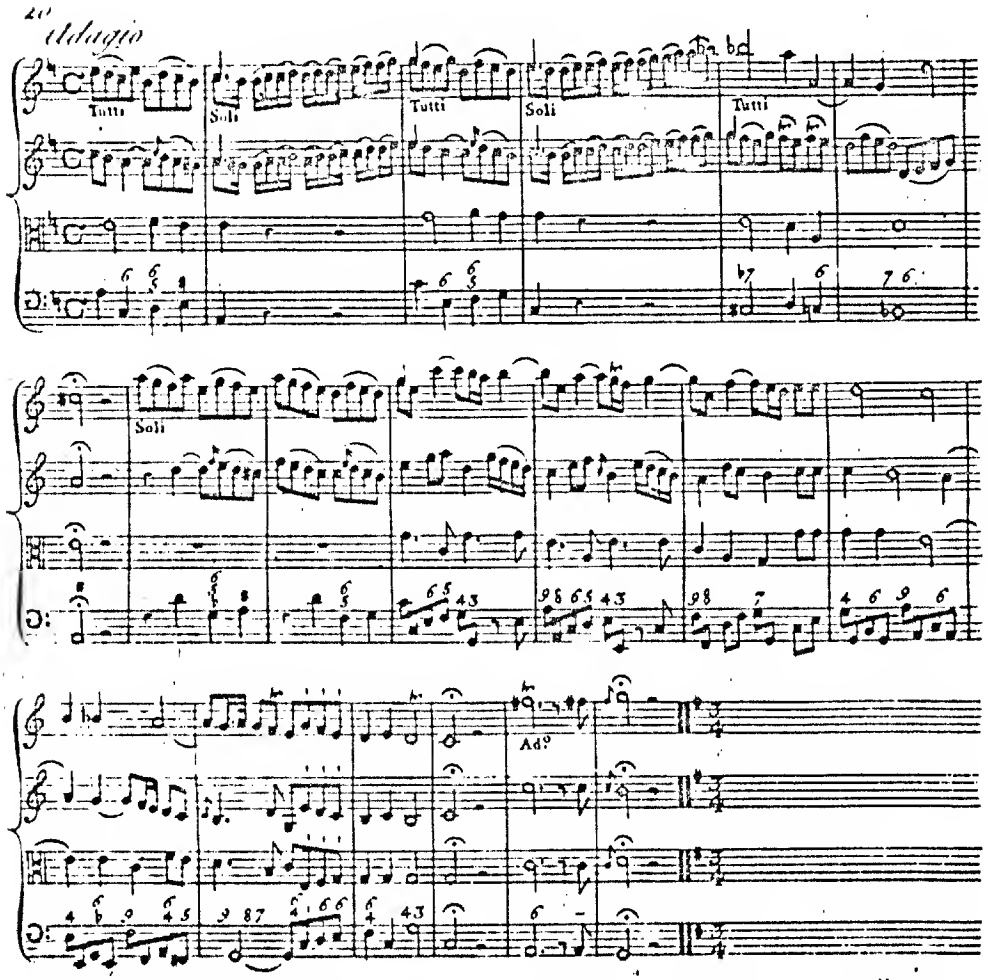

T.
Solo
Soli
Tutti
Tutti

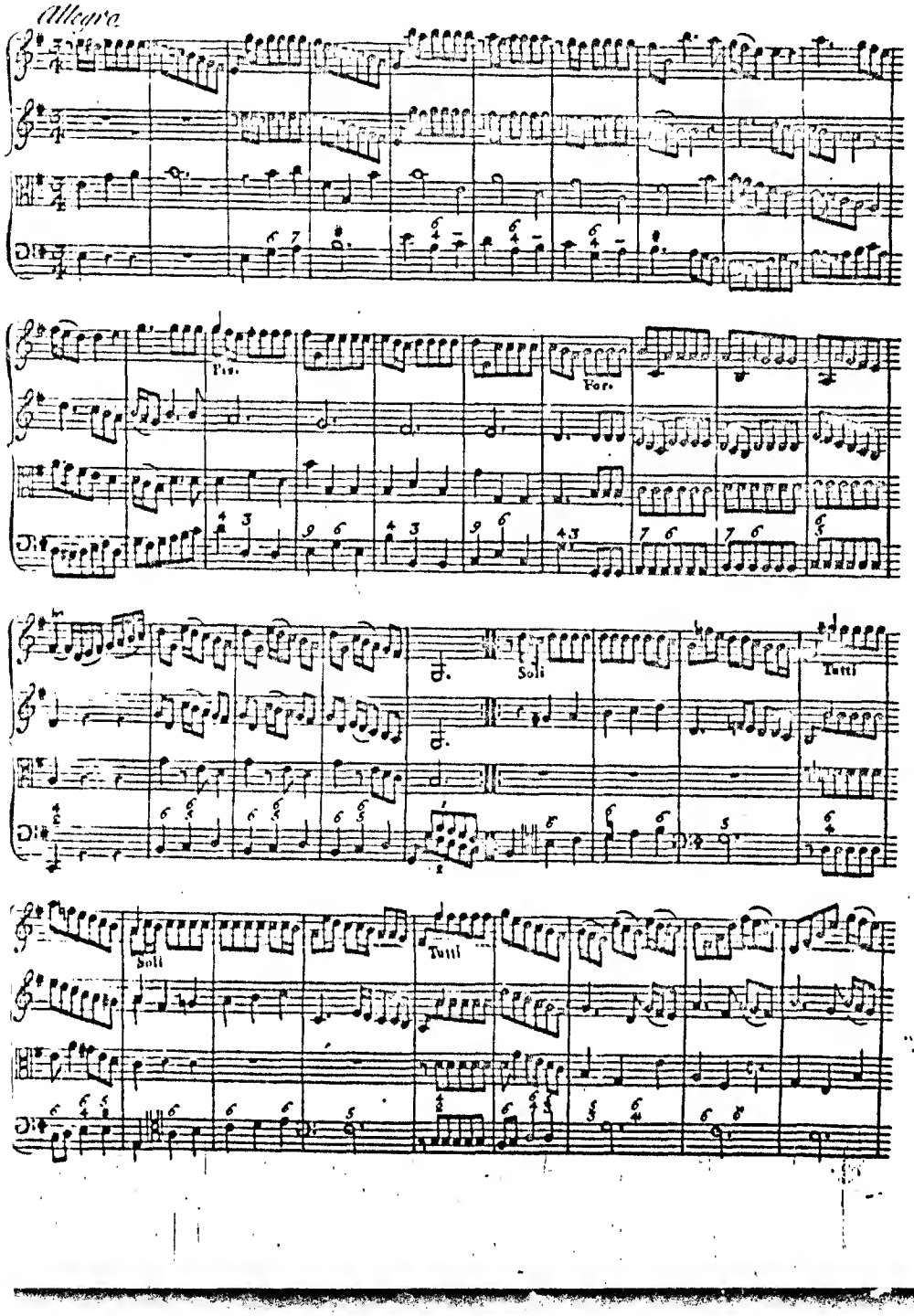
CONCERTO III

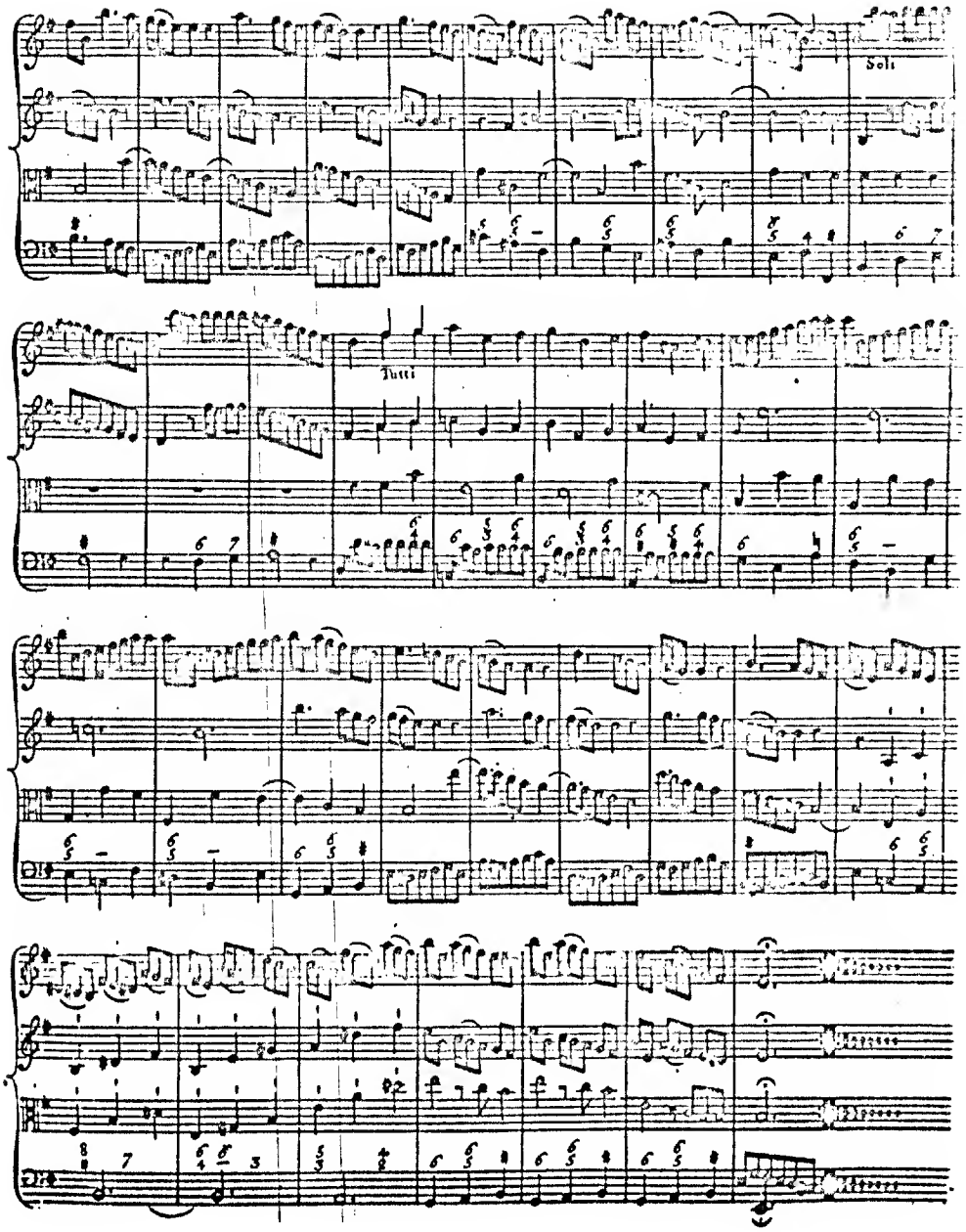



Allegro
Soli
Soli
Tutti
Tutti
Solo
Solo


Tutti
Volti

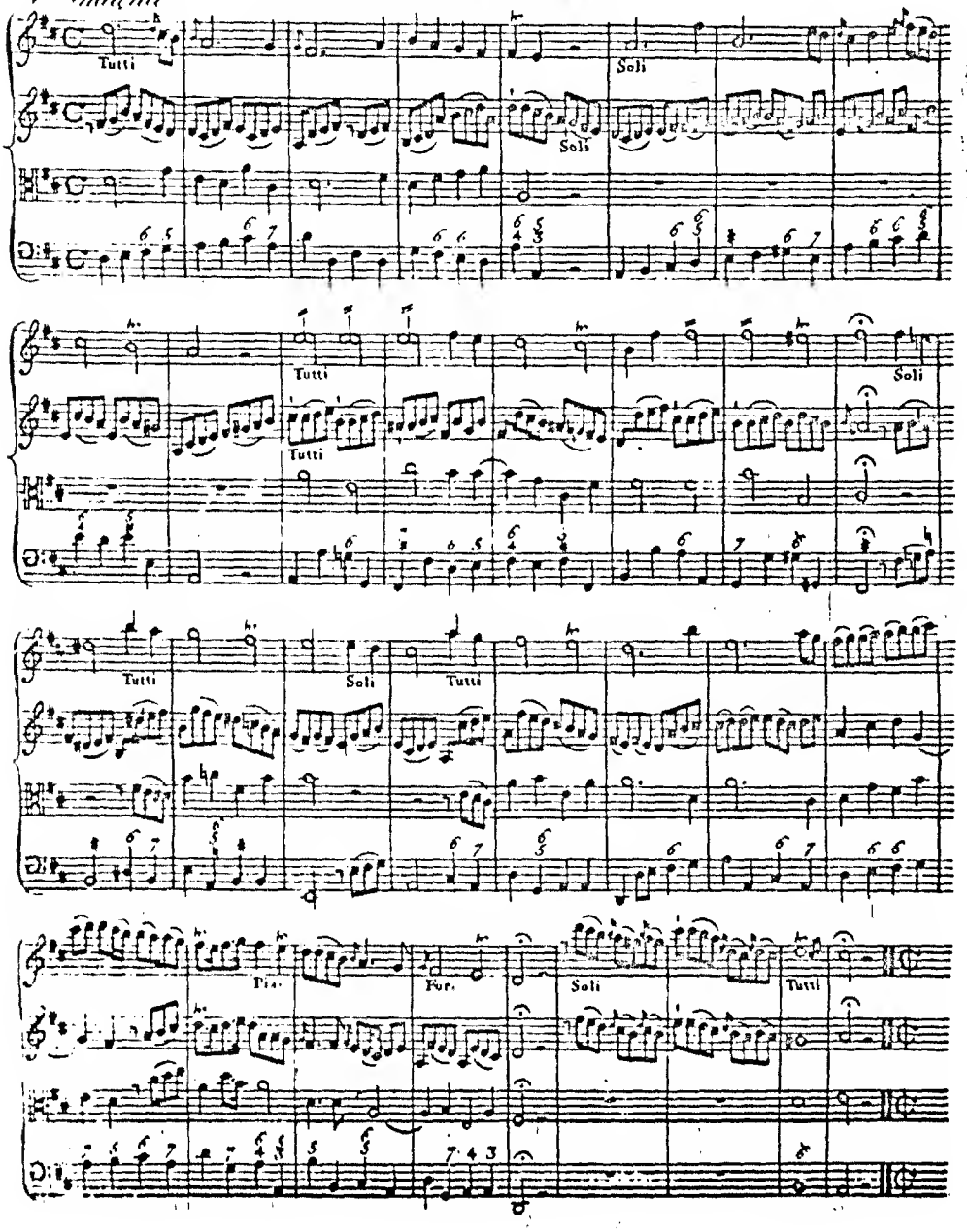

2do
Adagio
Tutti
Soli
Tutti
Soli
Tutti
Soli
Ad?

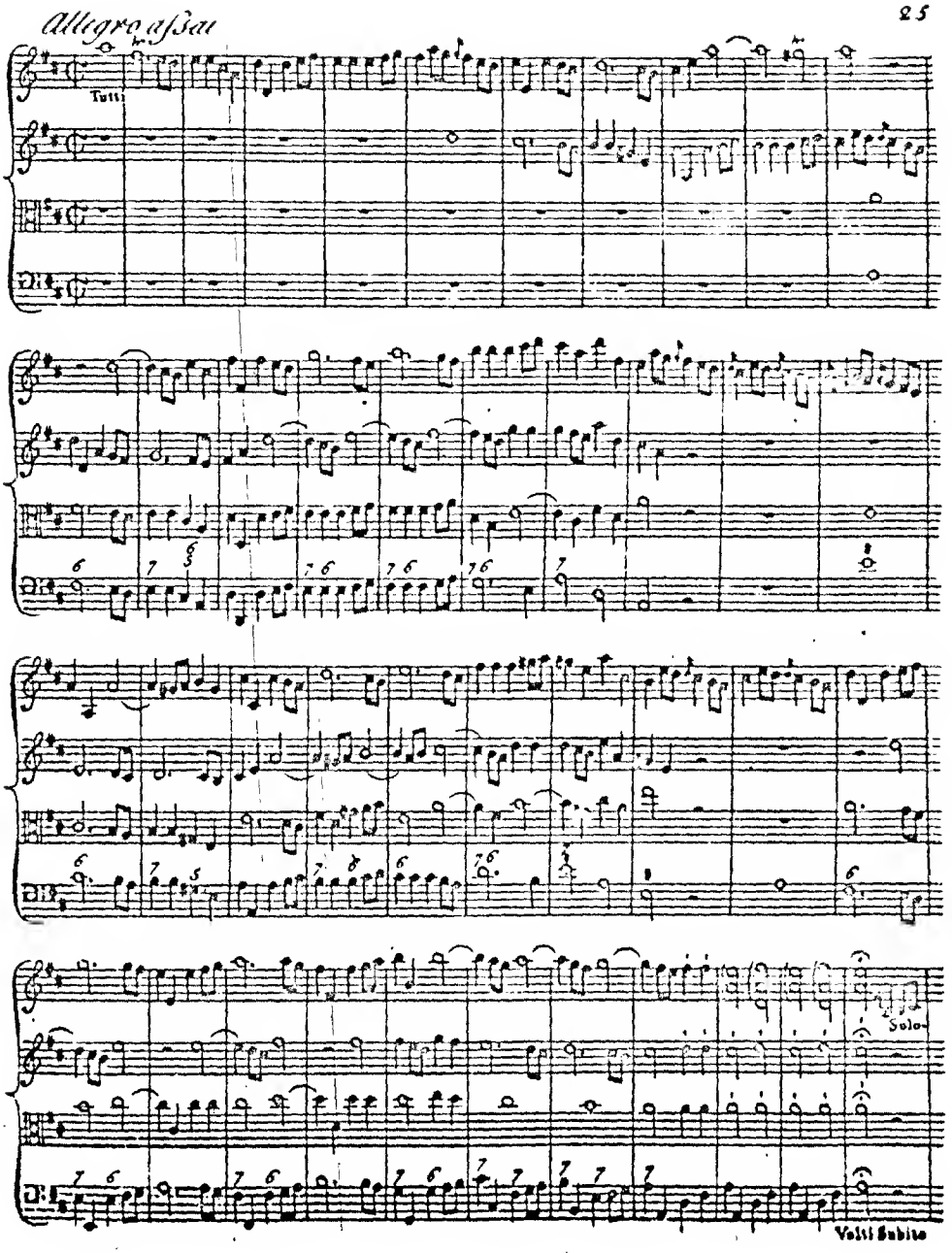

Allegro
Pia.
For.
Soli
Tutti
Soli
Tutti

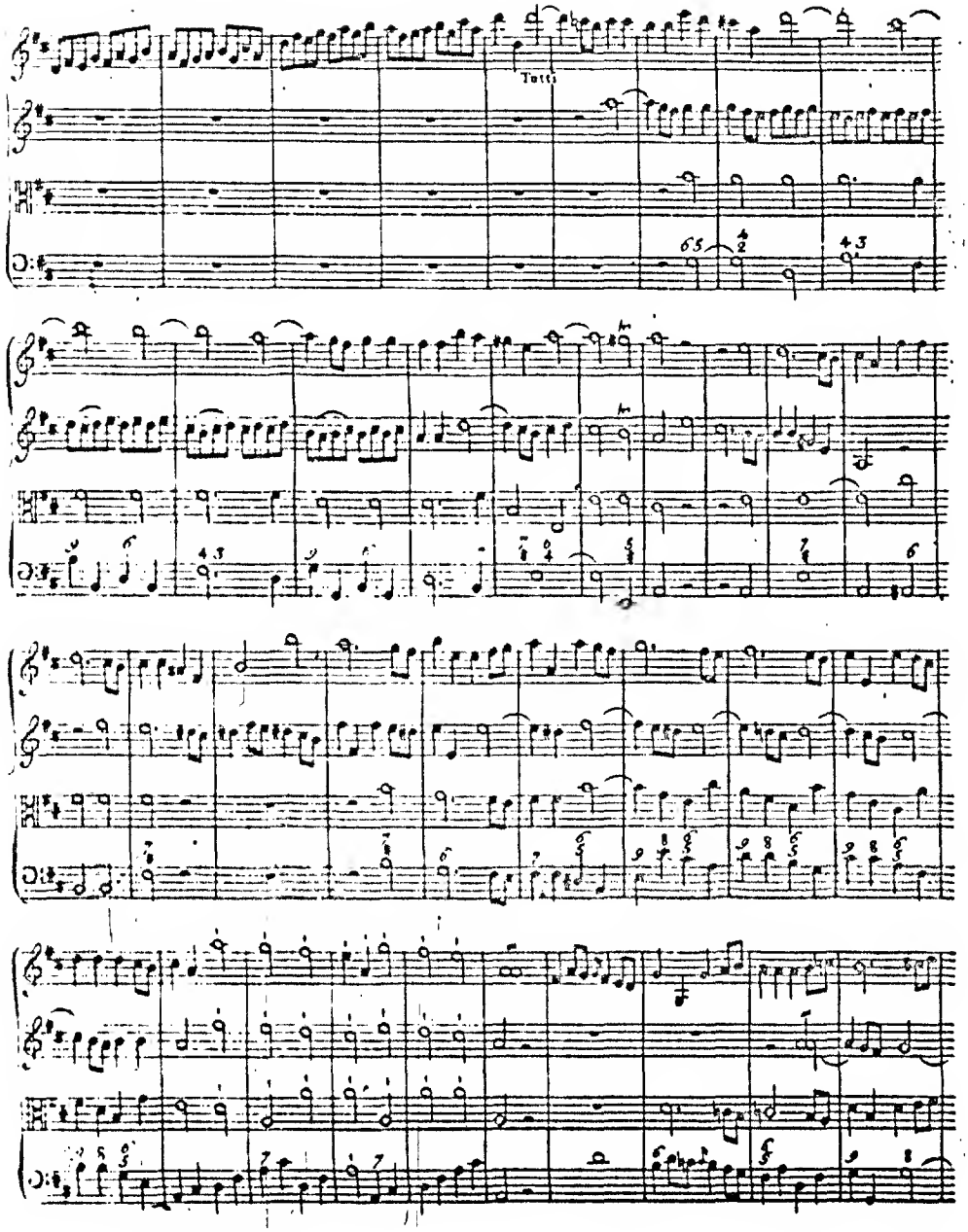

Soli
Tutti

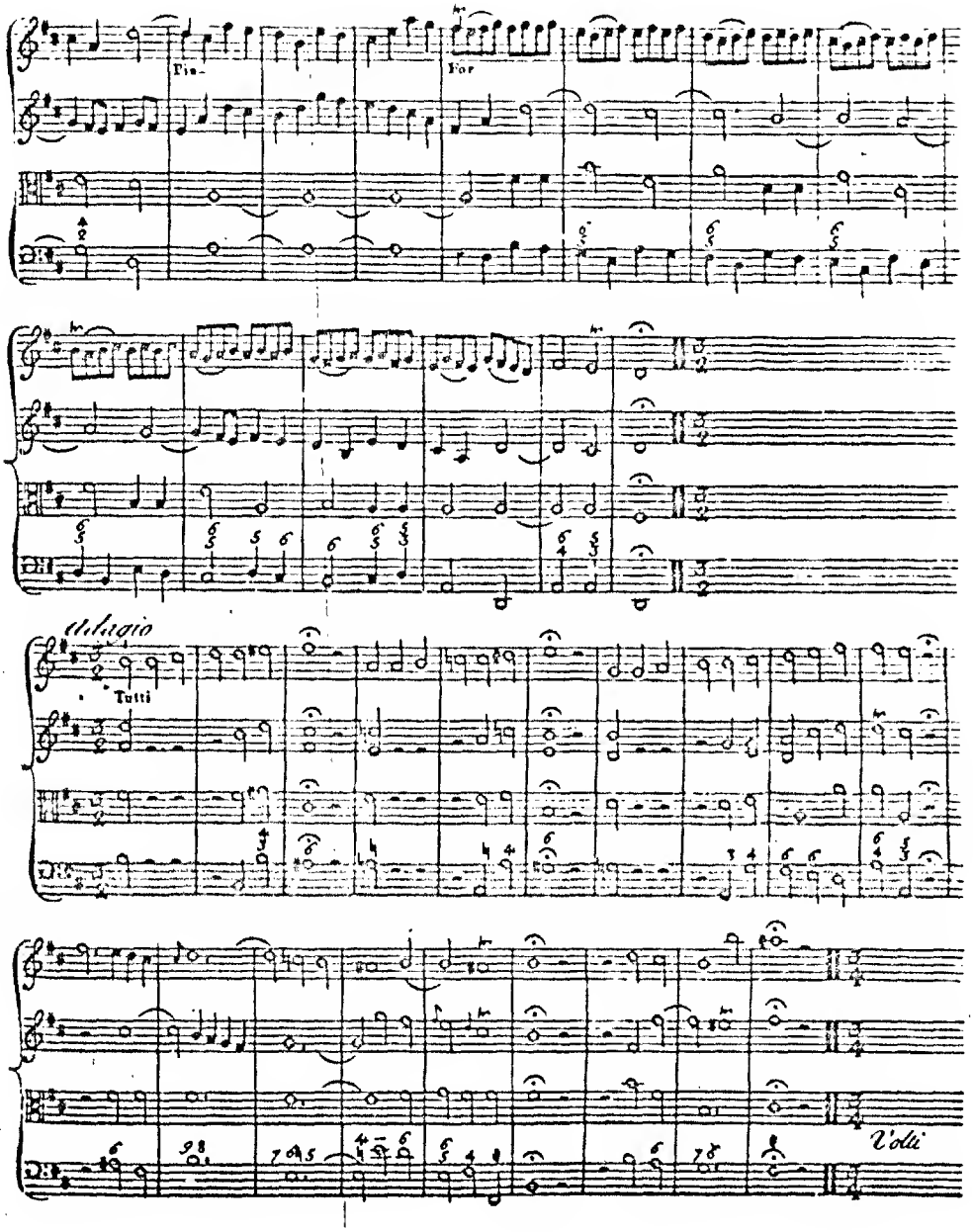
CONCERTO IV

Andante

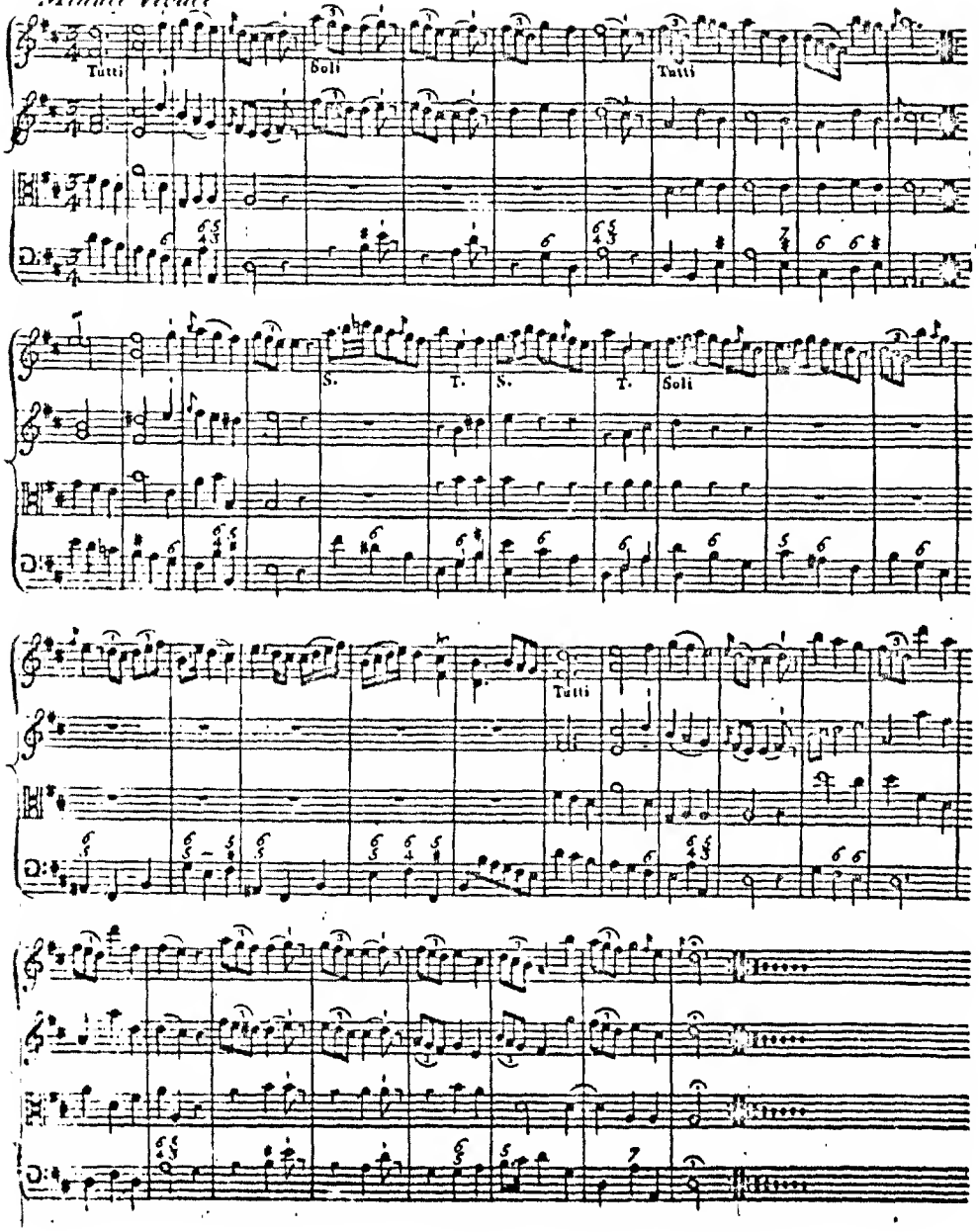



Allegro assai
Tutti
Solo
Tutti Subito


Tutti

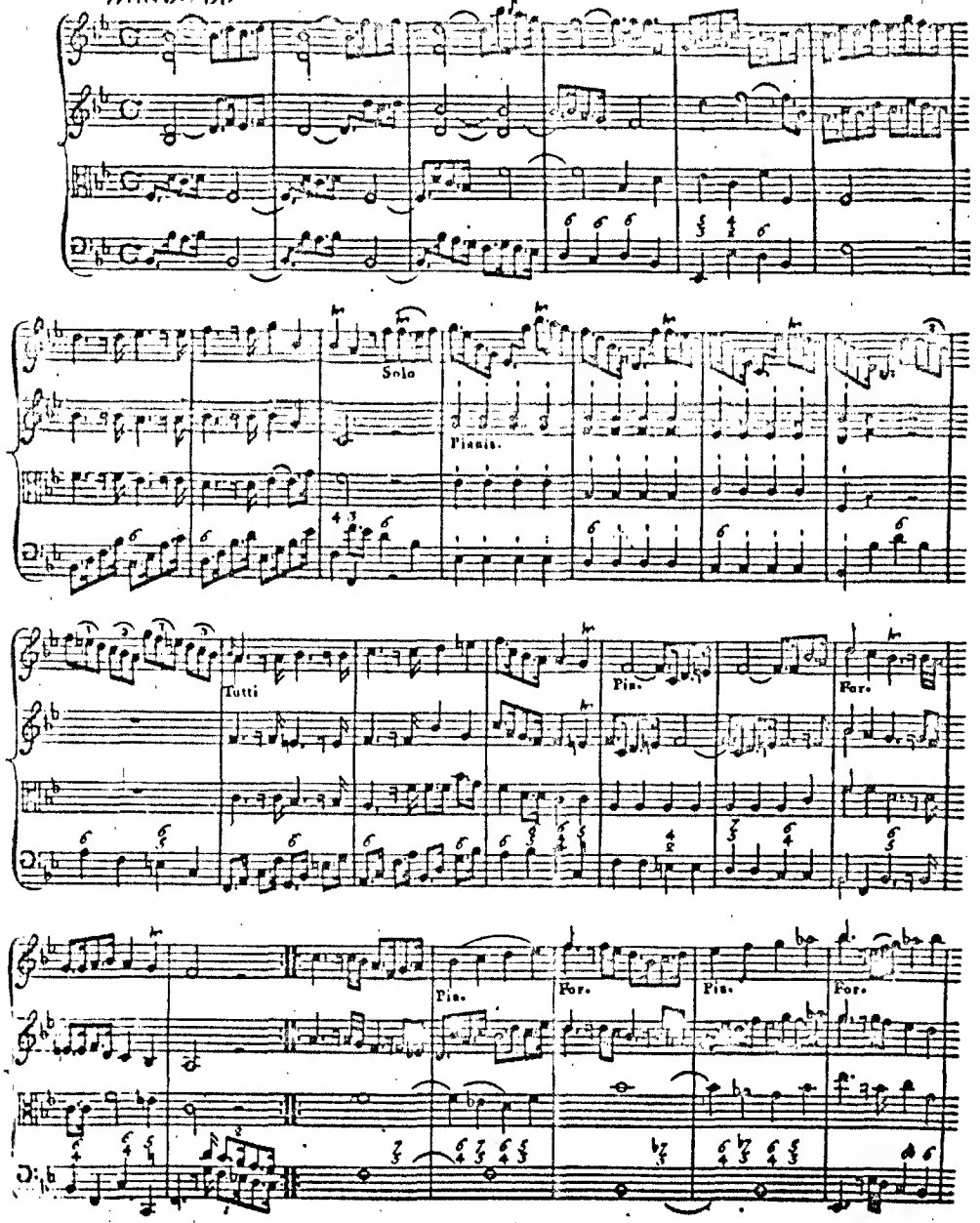

Vio-
For
Adagio
Tutti
Violi

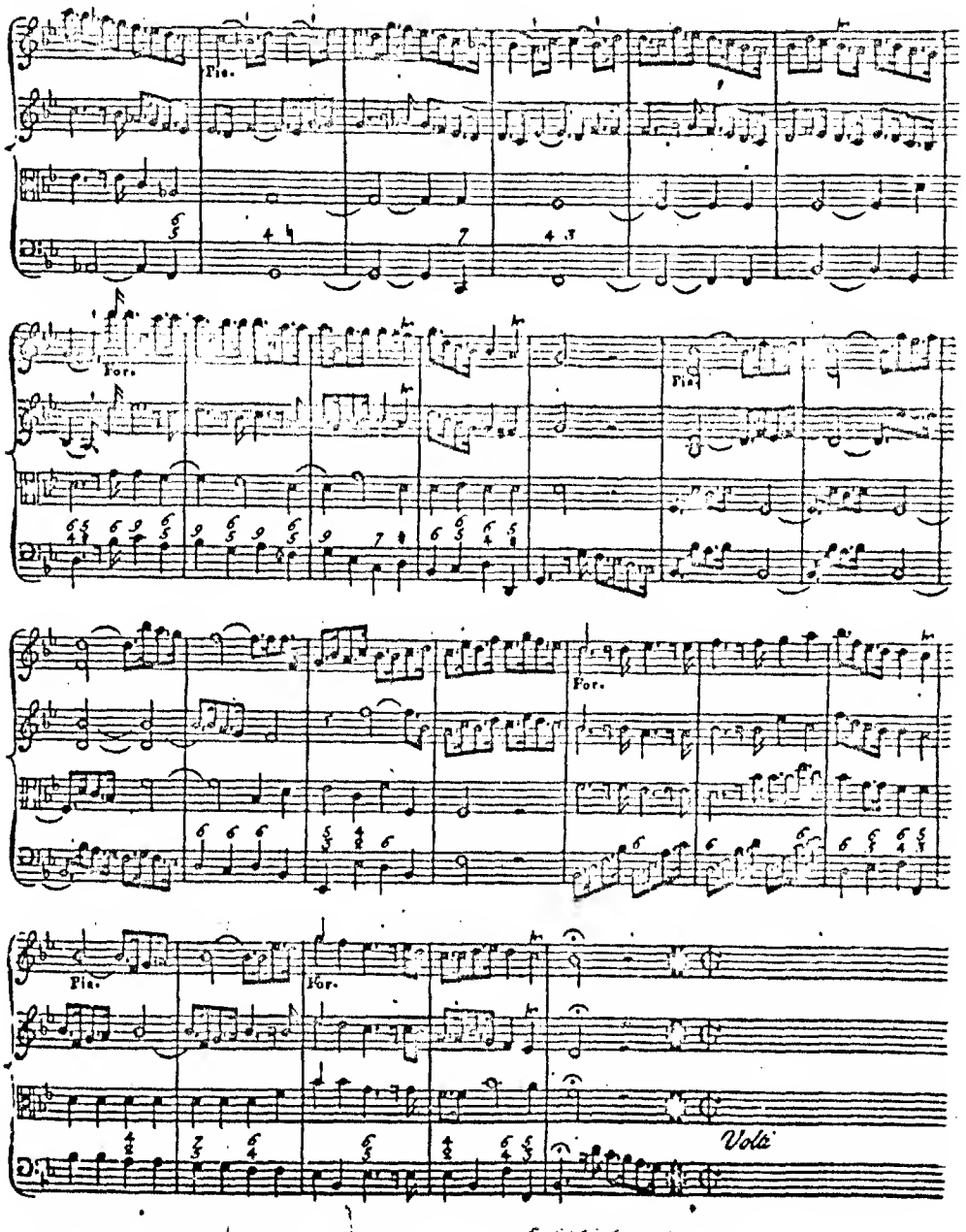
Minuet Vivace

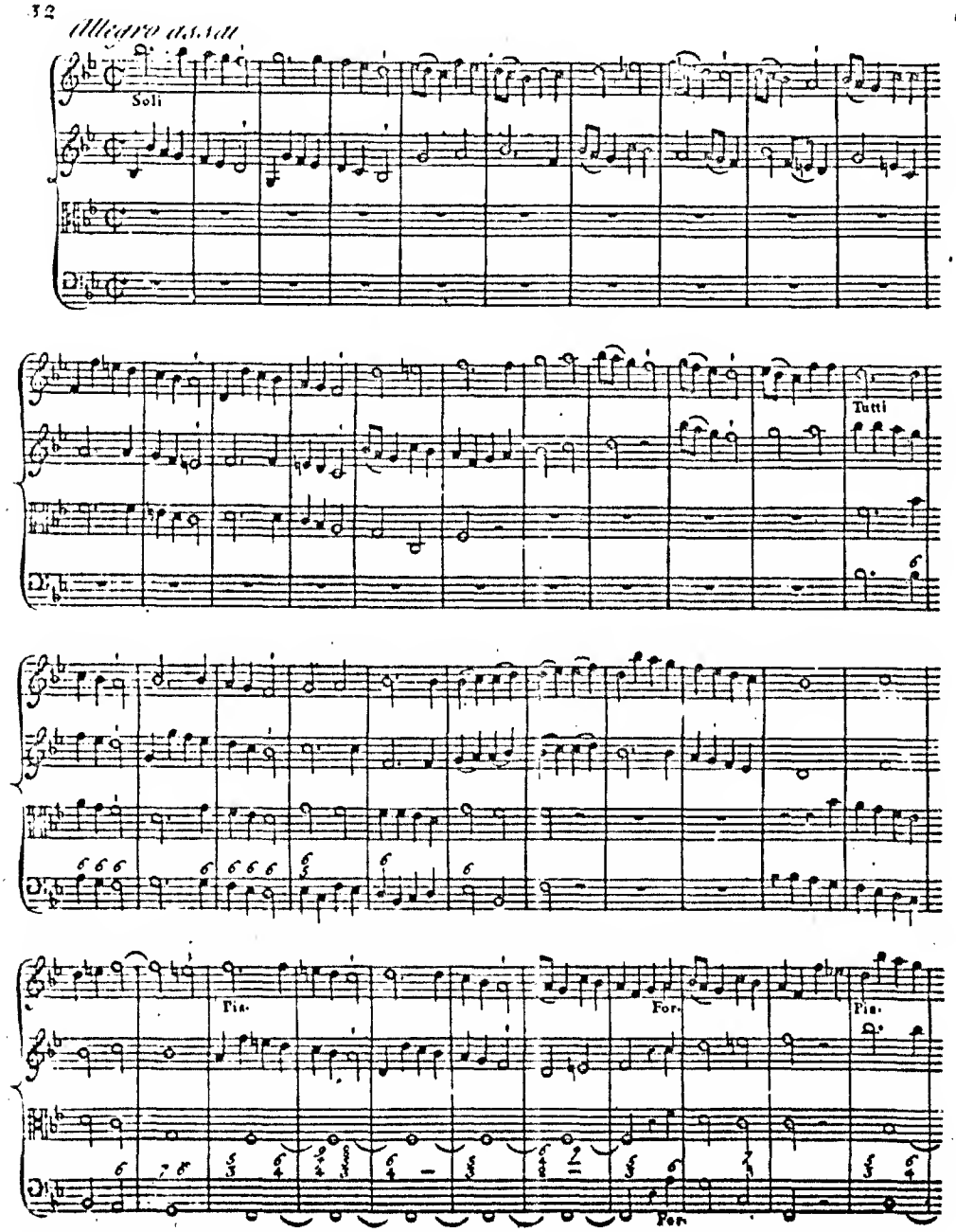


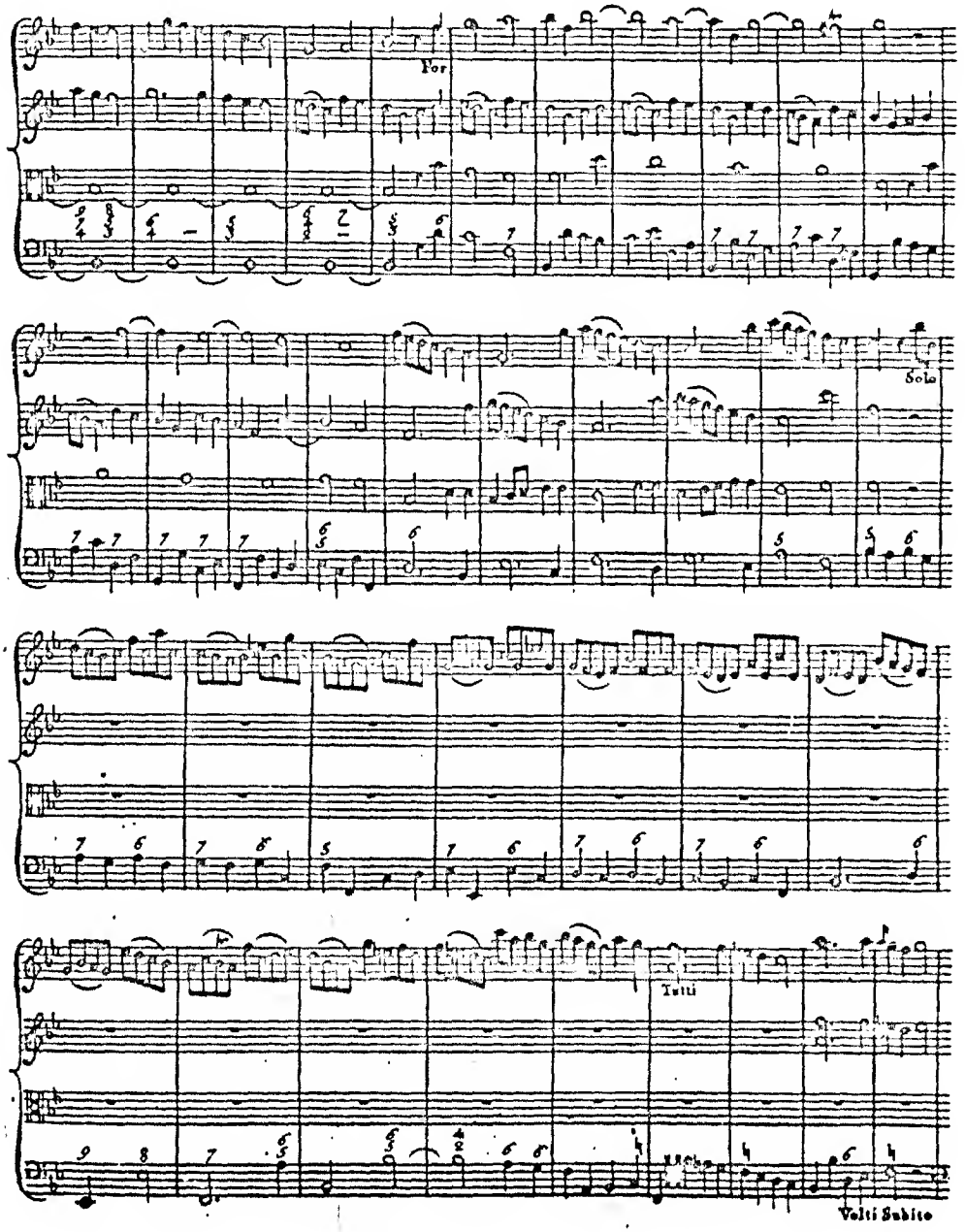
CONCERTO V

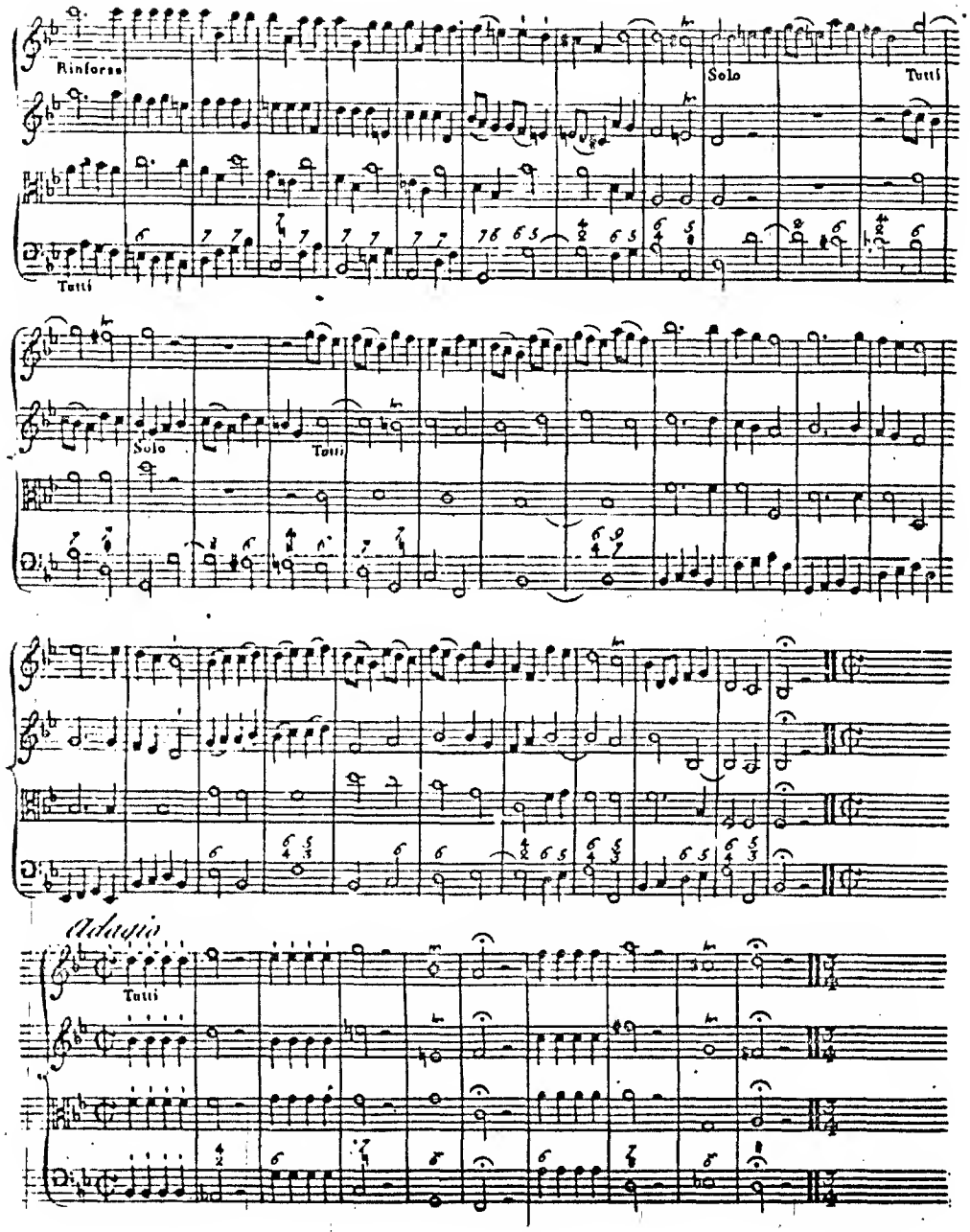
Maestoso



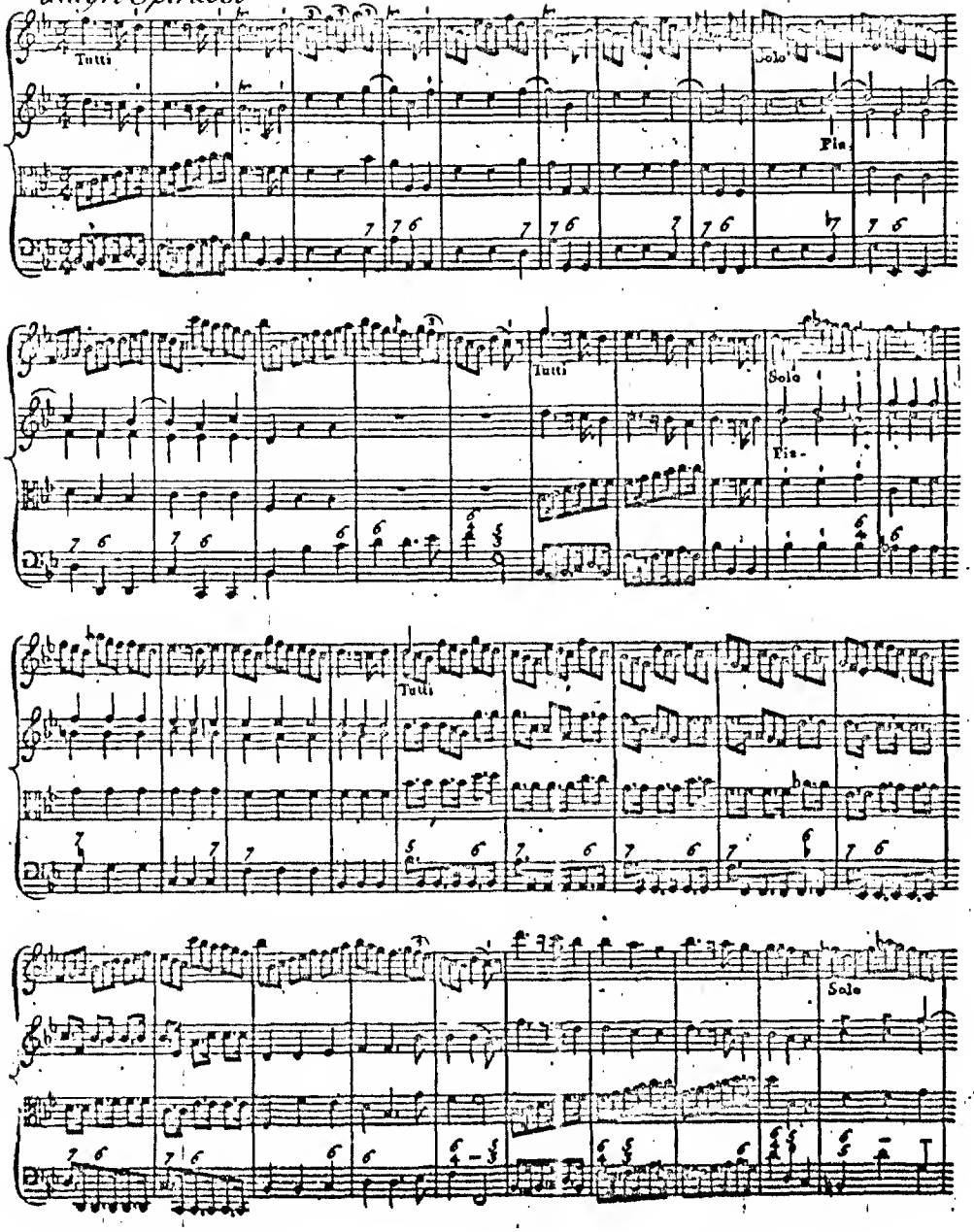

Pia.
For.
Pia.
For.
Pia.
For.
Volti

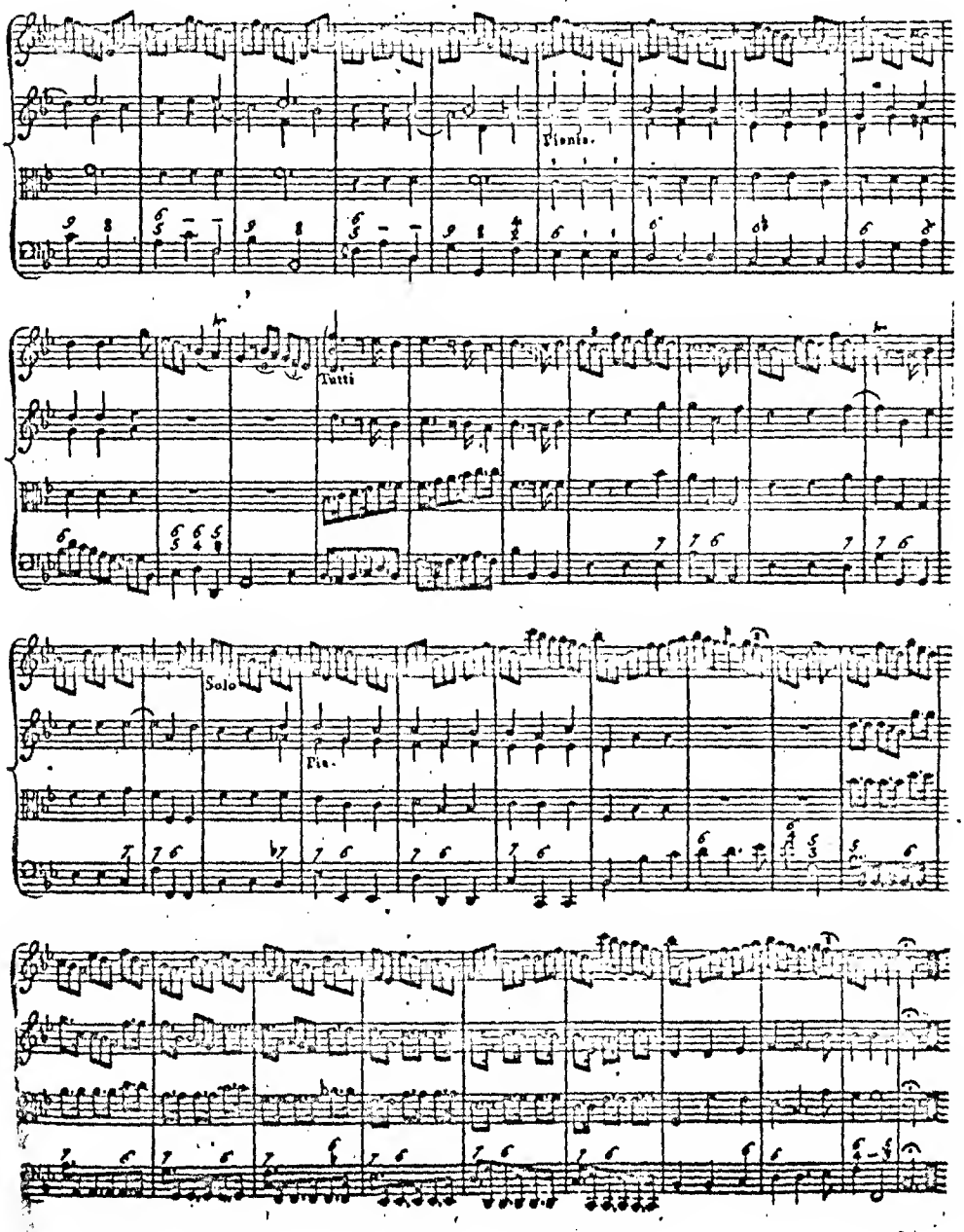

Allegro assai
Soli
Tutti
Pia.
For.
Pia.
For.


For
Solo
Tutti
Volti Subito

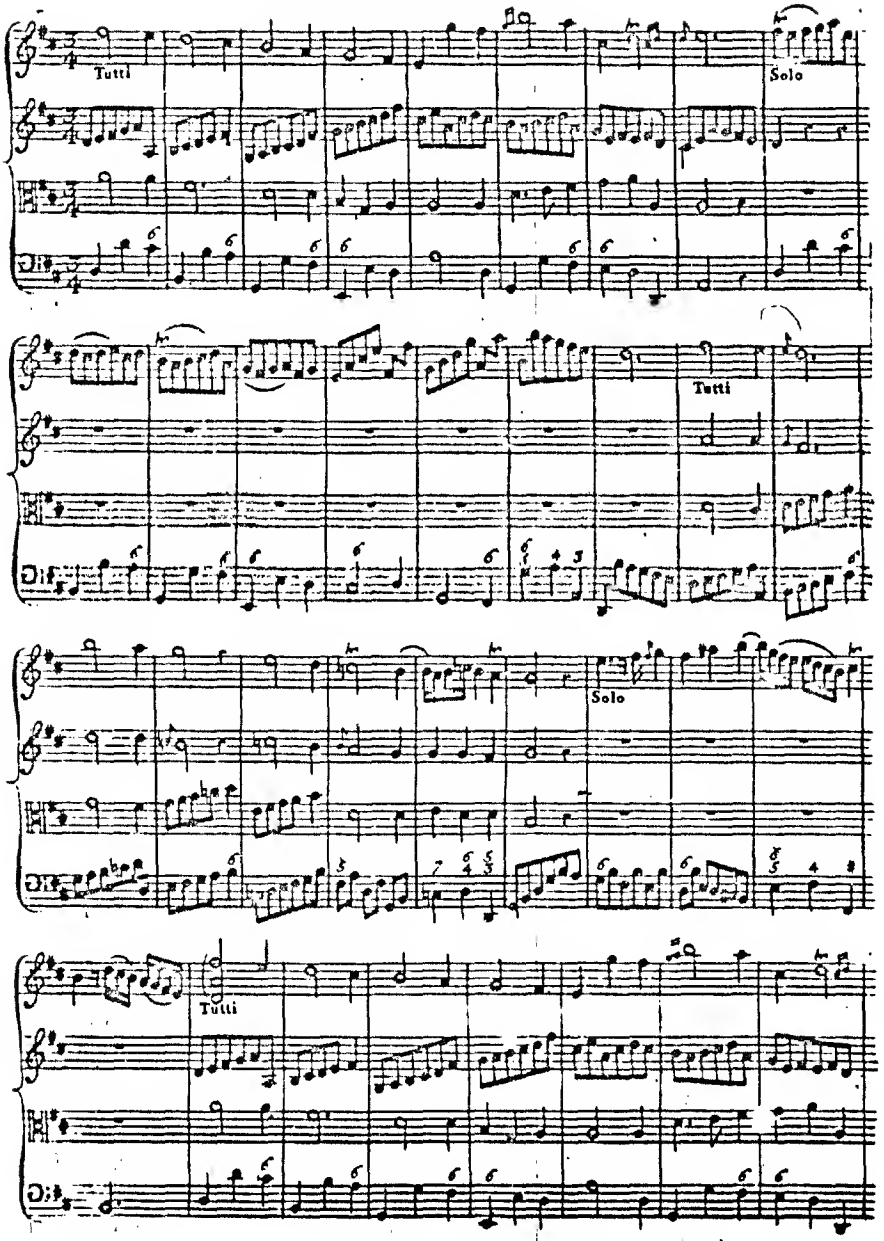

Rinforzo
Solo
Tutti
Tutti
Solo
Tutti
Adagio
Tutti

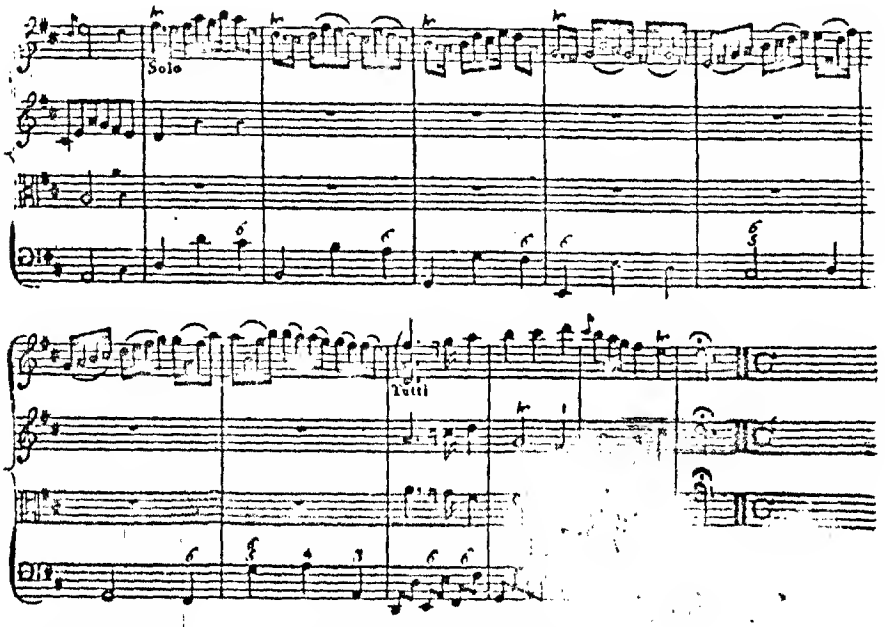
Allegro Spiritoso

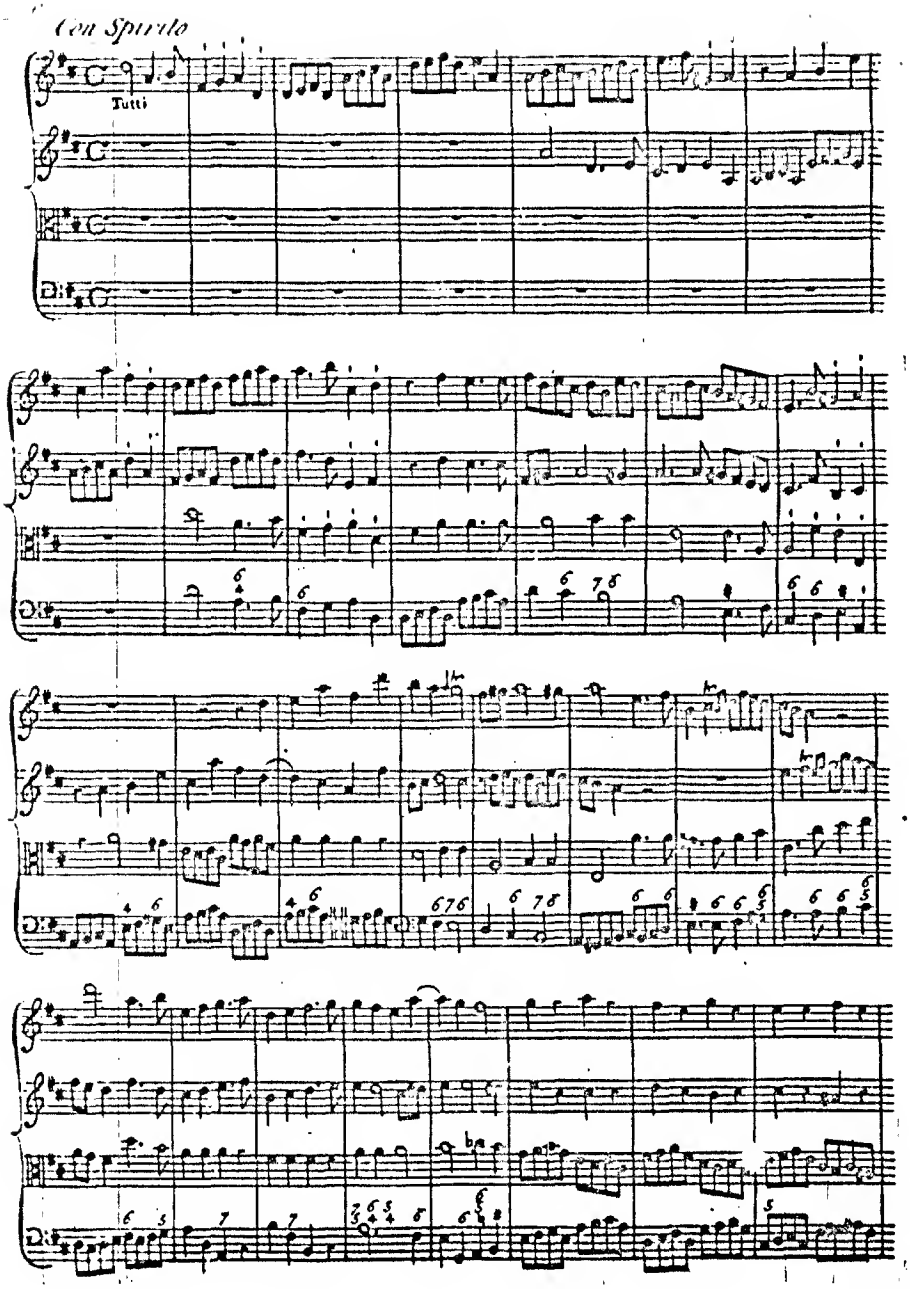


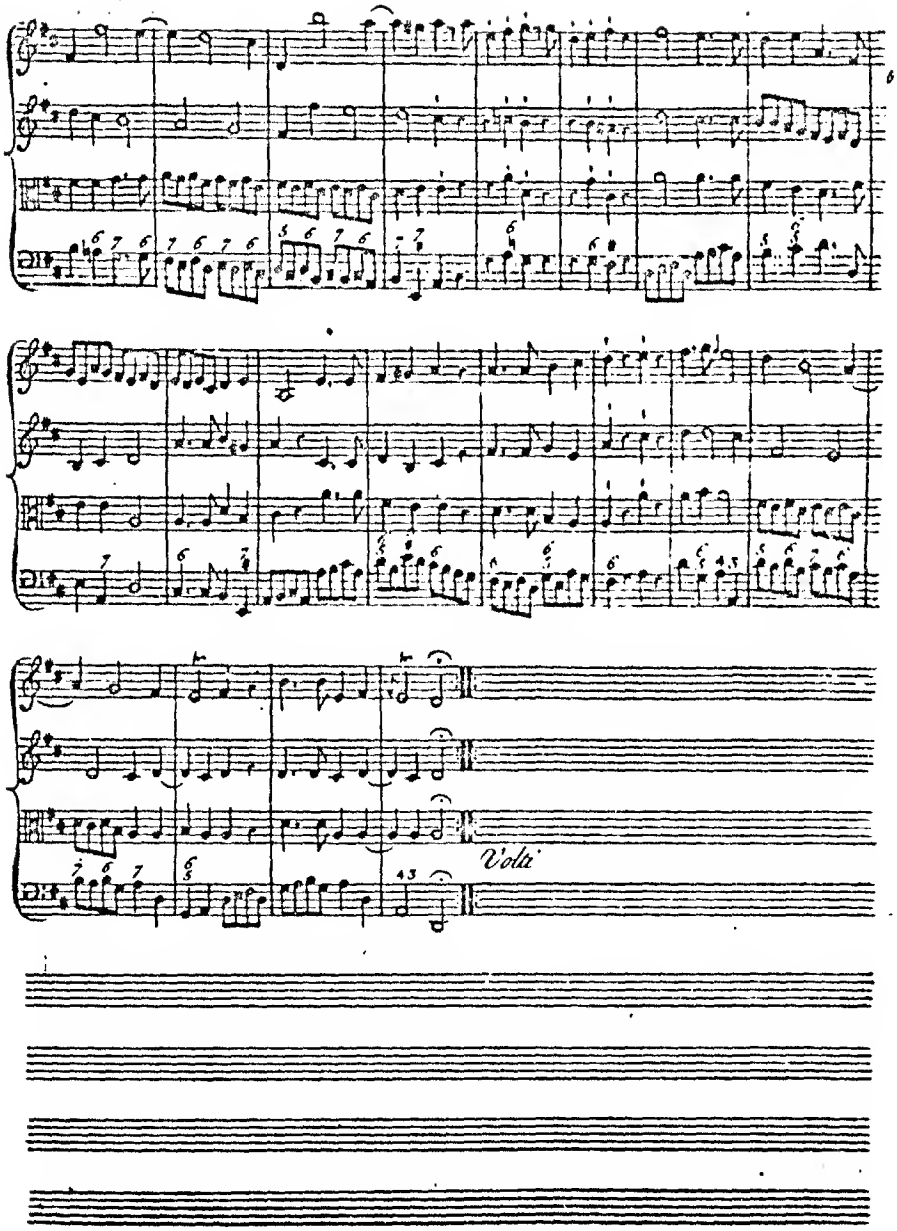

Piano.
Tutti
Solo
Tie.

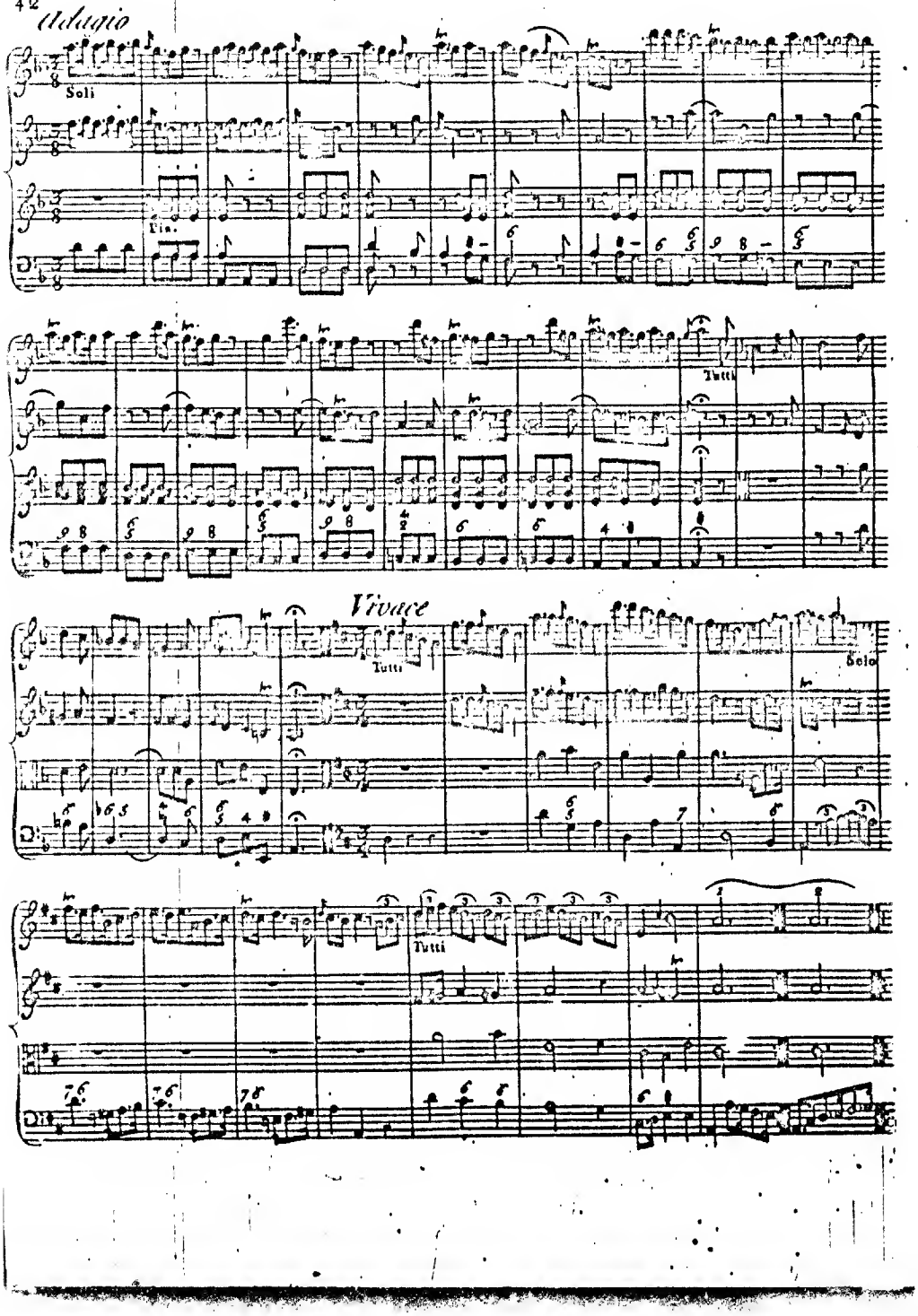
CONCERTO VI

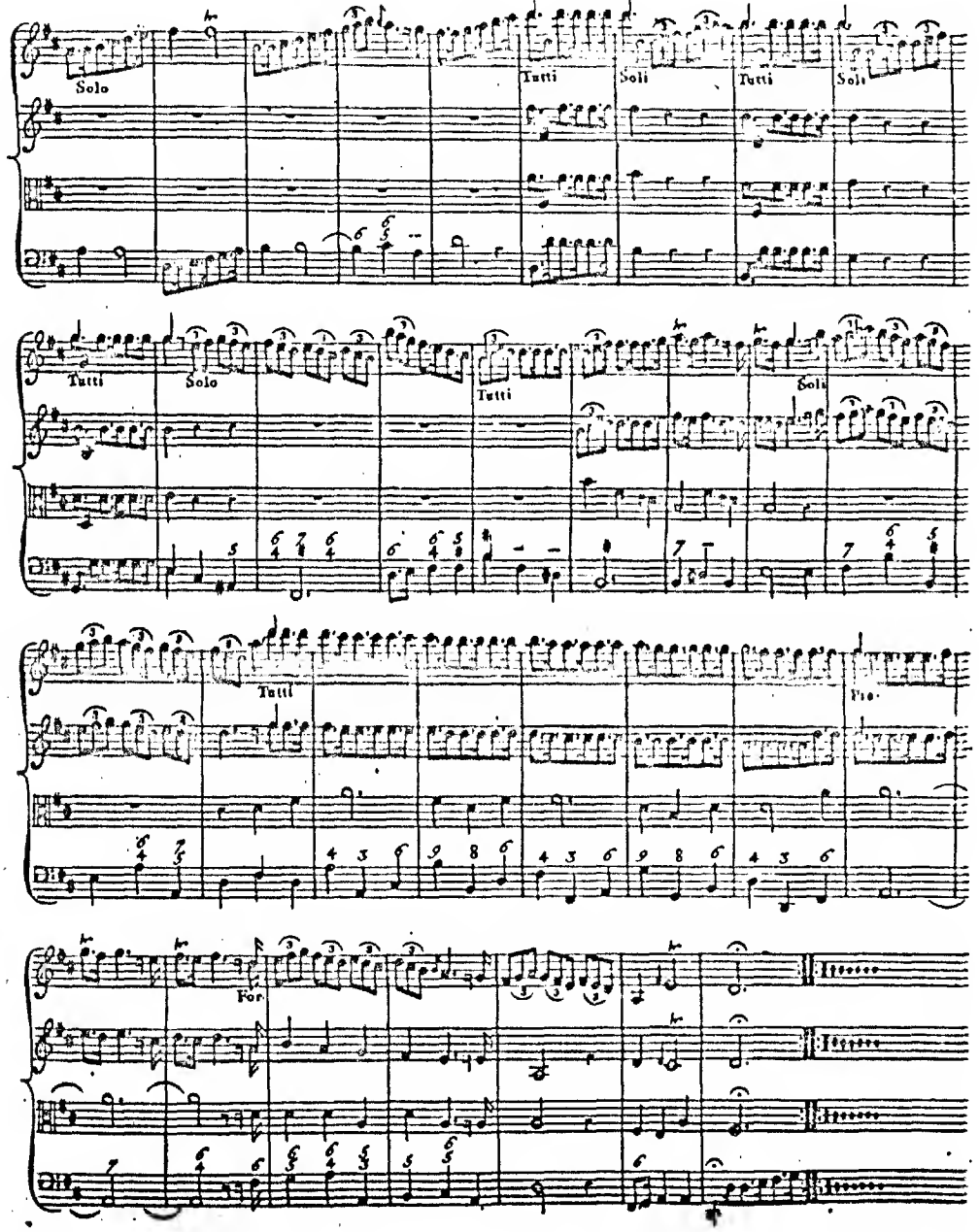



Solo
Tutti


Con Spirito
Tutti


Volti


Adagio
Soli
Tutti
Tutti
Vivace
Tutti
Solo
Tutti


Solo
Tutti
Soli
Tutti
Soli
Tutti
Solo
Tutti
Soli
Tutti
For.